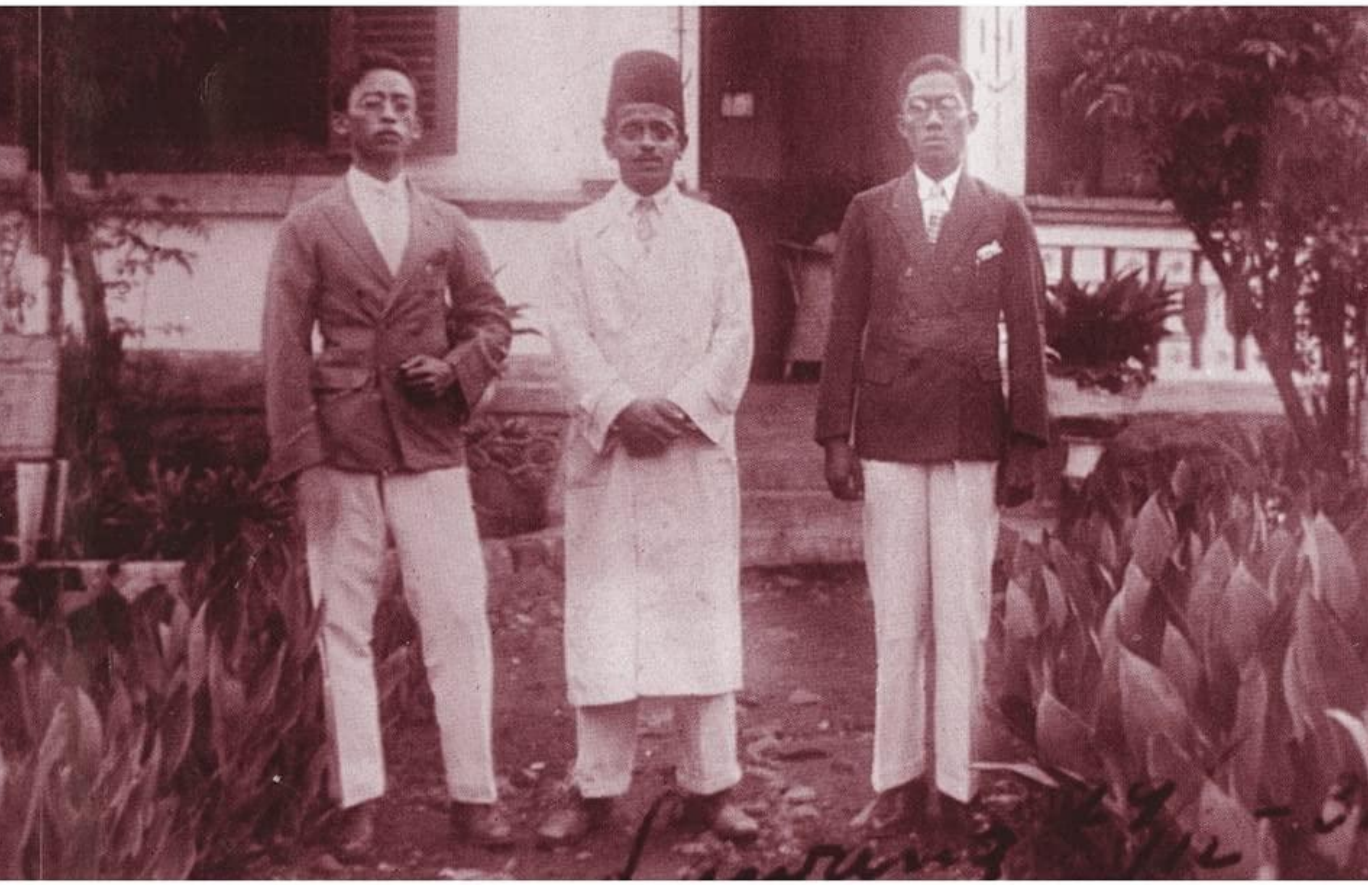
Natalie Mobini-Kesheh

The Hadrami Awakening

Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900–1942



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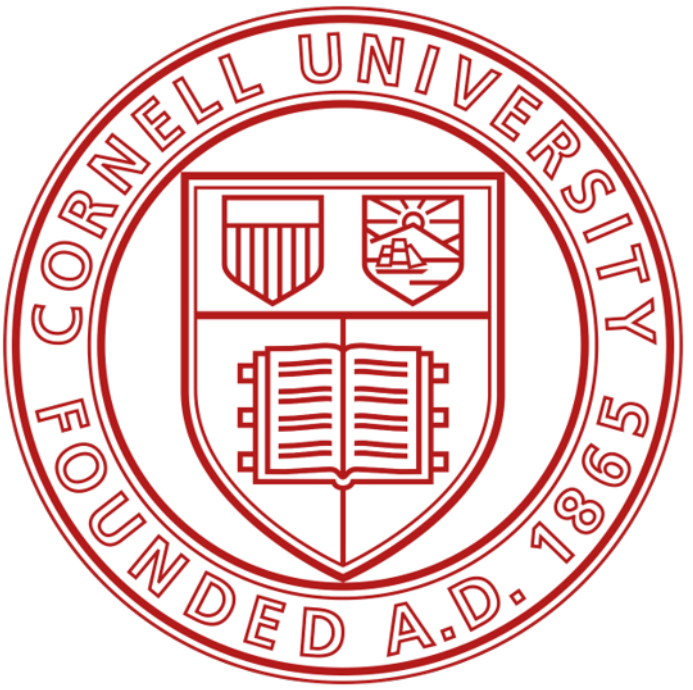

Cornell University

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Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942

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Eight years in racist prisons

Natalie Mobini-Kesheh

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Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942

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Cover art: Teachers at the al-Irshad boarding school in Lawang, East Java, December 1931. Photograph provided by Hussein Badjerei. Design by Judy Burns, Publications Services, Cornell University.

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A VISION OF UNITY
Australian Bahá'í Community
The Australian Bahá'í community was established by John Henry Hyde Dunn and Clara Dunn, who arrived in Sydney from the United States on 10 April 1920.
Hyde was aged 65 and Clara 51. They had little financial means, and knew no one in Australia. The qualities of courage, faith, persistence and audacity sustained them.
Hyde Dunn
Creating an Inclusive Narrative
Following the passing of Hyde Dunn in 1941, Clara continued to serve the growing Bahá'í community, travelling frequently to visit and encourage Bahá'ís across the country.
In 1958 she played a key role in the foundation ceremony of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Sydney, the
age of 91.

PREFACE

This is a study of changing patterns of identity within the Hadrami community in the Netherlands East Indies between 1900 and 1942. Its central argument is that the early decades of the twentieth century were a period of *nahḍah* or "awakening" for the Hadrami community in the Indies. The *nahḍah* was characterized by the adoption of modern, western-style methods of organization and education which aimed, above all, at the attainment of a loosely defined "progress."

What follows is the first attempt to document and analyze the Hadrami awakening. It aims to record the *nahḍah* as it was lived by the Hadramis themselves, attempting as far as possible to draw on their own writings and their own words. Its main sources are the approximately two dozen newspapers and magazines, in Arabic and Malay, which were published by the Hadramis in the Indies between 1914 and 1942.[1] These have been subjected to a close reading which identified key words and concepts, and traced how their meanings shifted over time. These sources are supplemented by other manuscripts, books, and pamphlets written during the same period. Archival records of the Dutch administration in the Indies and the British government in Aden, as well as a limited number of secondary sources, have been used where they can illuminate the discussion.

The study began as a more narrowly focused project which intended to record the history of al-Irshad, the Arab Society for Reform and Guidance, which was formed by Hadramis in Batavia in 1914. It soon became clear, however, that al-Irshad could only be understood in the wider context of the Hadrami awakening, and thus the broader canvas of the study gradually unfolded. Nonetheless al-Irshad still receives more detailed treatment in what follows than any other Hadrami organization. This emphasis is justified because al-Irshad was the foremost organization of the *nahḍah*. It was the most reformist in outlook, the most committed and organized in its activities, and it participated, on one side or another, in several crucial debates about identity which preoccupied the Hadramis. Focusing on al-Irshad thus provides an entry into all of the important developments affecting the Hadramis at the time.

The Hadrami diaspora, whether in the Indies or elsewhere, has been neglected by modern scholars. The Hadramis attracted the attention of several Dutch scholar-officials toward the end of the nineteenth century, most notably L. W. C. van den Berg and C. Snouck Hurgronje. Their interest was linked to the dominant perception within the Dutch colonial government that the Hadramis formed a

[1] Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, "The Arab Periodicals of the Netherlands East Indies, 1914-1942," *BKI* 152,2 (1996): 236-56.

threat to colonial security due to their potential pan-Islamic influence over the indigenous population.[2] It was in this environment that van den Berg's outstanding work, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien,* was produced—a survey of the Hadrami community in the Indies which has yet to be matched.[3] But when the perception of threat receded in the early twentieth century, official interest in the Hadramis declined correspondingly, a trend which is reflected in the change in title of the office created for Snouck Hurgronje, from "Adviser for Native and Arab Affairs" to "Adviser for Native and Islamic Affairs." For several decades publications on the Hadramis in Indonesia were infrequent at best.[4]

Interest in the community increased somewhat during the 1980s,[5] and by the mid-1990s—perhaps in response to the rise in diaspora studies generally—Hadrami studies took a great leap forward with the convening of two international workshops: "South Arabian Migration Movements in the Indian Ocean, the Hadhrami Case c. 1750-1967," held in April 1995 at the School of Oriental and

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[2] Hamid Algadri, *Politik Belanda terhadap Islam dan Keturunan Arab di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Haji Masagung, 1988), pp. 75-84.

[3] L. W. C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1886). Much of Snouck Hurgronje's writings on the Hadramis can be found in the collection of his advice to the colonial government, *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936,* ed. E. Gobee and C. Adriaanse (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), vol. 2, pp. 1510-98.

[4] Important contributions by Dutch Indies scholar-officials B. Schrieke and G. F. Pijper between 1920 and 1950, a series of somewhat repetitious articles by Justus M. van der Kroef in the early 1950s, and a spate of publications in Indonesian by Hisyam Ahmad in the late 1970s, virtually encompass the entire literature before the 1980s. B. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur," *Overdruk uit de Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 58 (1920): 189-240; G. F. Pijper, *Beberapa Studi tentang Sejarah Islam di Indonesia 1900-1950* (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 1984); Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Arabs in Indonesia," *The Middle East Journal* 7 (Summer 1953): 300-23; Justus M. van der Kroef, *Indonesia in the Modern World* (Bandung: Masa Baru, 1954), pp. 250-74; Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Indonesian Arabs," *Civilisations* 5,1 (1955): 15-24; Hisyam Ahmad, *Latar Belakang Sosial Budaya Masyarakat Keturunan Arab dan Sejarah Pertumbuhan dan Perjuangan Partai Arab Indonesia* (Bandung: Lembaga Kebudayaan Universitas Padjadjaran, 1976); Hisyam Ahmad, "Masyarakat Keturunan Arab di Pekalongan," *Berita Antropologi* 31 (1977): 84-103; Hisyam Ahmad, *Masyarakat Keturunan Arab di Kota Pekalongan* (Bandung: Lembaga Kebudayaan Universitas Padjadjaran, 1977); and Hisyam Ahmad, *Bibliografi Studi Masyarakat Arab di Indonesia* (Bandung: Lembaga Kebudayaan Universitas Padjadjaran, 1981).

[5] For example, Algadri, *Politik Belanda,* first published as Hamid Algadri, *C. Snouck Hurgronje: Politik Belanda terhadap Islam dan Keturunan Arab* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1984); Joseph Kostiner, "The Impact of the Hadrami Emigrants in the East Indies on Islamic Modernism and Social Change in the Hadramawt during the Twentieth Century," in *Islam in Asia. Volume II: Southeast and East Asia,* ed. Raphael Israeli and Anthony H. Johns (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984), pp. 206-37; Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986); Huub de Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity among the Arabs in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942," *Indonesia* 55 (April 1993): 73-90; and Sumit Mandal, "Finding their Place: A History of Arabs in Java under Dutch Rule, 1800-1924" (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1994). A third dissertation of relevance to the Hadramis is Bisri Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati: Pemikiran Pembaharuan dan Pemurnian Islam dalam Masyarakat Arab Hadrami di Indonesia" (PhD dissertation, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, 1991).

African Studies at the University of London[6]; and "The Arabs in South-East Asia (1870-c. 1990)," held in December 1997 at the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology in Leiden. Participation in these workshops has provided a great impetus to my own work, and it is hoped that the present publication will help to stimulate further scholarly interest in the Hadramis in Indonesia and other parts of the diaspora.

A study of this nature—crossing national, colonial, and linguistic borders—inevitably gives rise to questions of orthography. The primary sources for the study utilize several different systems to transliterate Arabic: the English system, the Dutch system, the old and new Indonesian systems. For example the name of the organization Al-Irshad is found variously as Al-Irshad, Al-Irsjad, Al-Irsyad, and Alersjat. I have chosen to transliterate Arabic words according to the general English transliteration system recommended by the Indonesian Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS).[7] The same method has been applied to Arabic personal and place names, except where a clear and consistent preferred spelling can be established or there is a standard English usage. For a few Arabic words which occur frequently I use a simplified spelling: Al-Irshad, Irshadi, Hadramawt, Hadrami, 'Alawi, and Qur'an.

Indonesian words are spelled in accordance with the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* produced by the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture. Indonesian personal names retain their original spelling. Indonesian place names are spelled according to modern usage except in cases where the names have been changed completely: hence I use Surabaya rather than Soerabaia, but Batavia rather than Jakarta. Dutch words are spelled in accordance with contemporary usage. Quotations have been left in the original spelling. Where the plural of a word from any language is used in the text, it is formed by adding an "s" to the singular form: hence Hadramis rather than Hadarima, Irshadis rather than Irshadiyun. A brief glossary and a list of common abbreviations can be found at the end of the book.

Like any work of scholarship, this book was written only through the assistance of many individuals. I am particularly indebted to Professor M. C. Ricklefs and Dr. Jane Drakard, who offered unstinting advice, support, and counsel throughout the doctoral research in which it had its origins. Dr. Martin van Bruinessen, Professor David P. Chandler, Dr. Greg Fealy, Dr. Ulrike Freitag, Dr. Michael Godley, Professor J. D. Legge, and Professor Anthony Reid have also provided incisive comments on various drafts of the book, for which I offer my grateful thanks. Needless to say, the remaining flaws are my own responsibility.

Financial support for the research came from an Australian Postgraduate Research Award from the Australian federal government. The various field trips were sponsored by grants from the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Monash Asia Institute, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, and the Faculty of Arts at Monash University. I would like to record my appreciation to all of them. I must also thank the staff of the following institutions: the General State Archives

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[6] Papers presented at this workshop have since been published in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

[7] Johannes den Heijer, *Pedoman Transliterasi Bahasa Arab* (Jakarta: Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies, 1992).

in The Hague, the Royal Institute for Linguistics and Anthropology in Leiden, the Public Records Office and India Office Library in London, the University of Malaya Library in Kuala Lumpur, and the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI), National Library of Indonesia, and National Archives of Indonesia, all in Jakarta. Special thanks are due to the staff of the History Department and the Center of Southeast Asian Studies at Monash University; and to Mrs. Helen Soemardjo, Head of the Monash University Asian Studies Research Library, who went to considerable lengths to obtain some valuable research materials for me.

Among many valued colleagues at the Center of Southeast Asian Studies at Monash University I must single out Greg Fealy, whose time at the Center and research interests overlapped with mine, and who, with unfailing diligence, insight, cheerfulness, and patience, has read and commented on the entire work many times over. His scholarship and friendship provided a model towards which I still aspire.

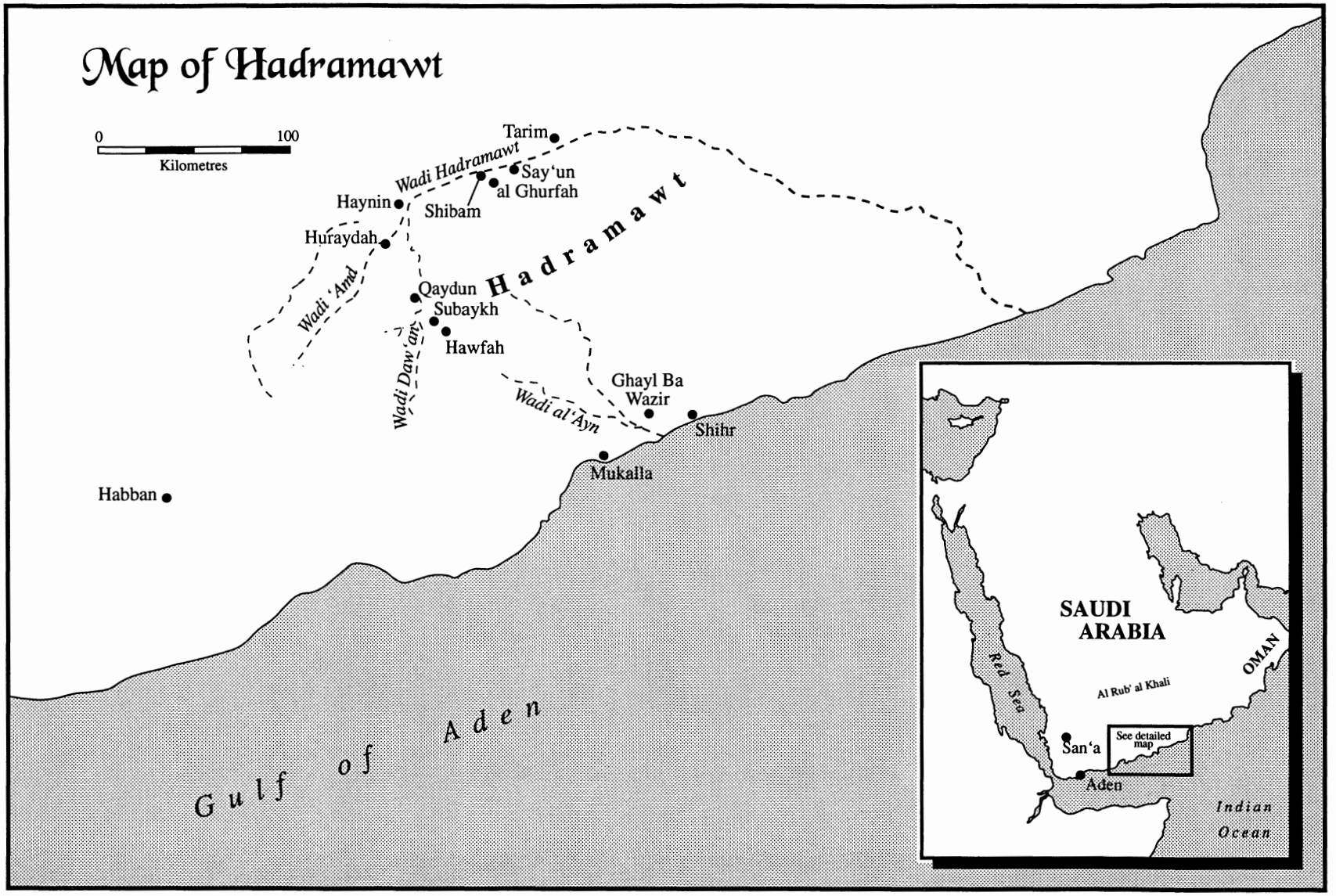
This work would have been a great deal poorer without the kind cooperation of various individuals who consented to be interviewed and shared their private collections of documents with me. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Bisri Affandi, the late Mr. Hamid Algadri, Geys Amar, Ali Binnur, Dr. Husain Haikal, and Djadid Lahdji. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Hussein Badjerei, who generously shared his time, knowledge, documents, and *emping*, and has been a tireless and exact correspondent.

Fieldwork was made easier and more enjoyable by the hospitality of many individuals who allowed me to stay in their homes while I conducted it. My heartfelt thanks go to: the family of Bisri Affandi (Surabaya), the family of Usha Cheryan (Kuala Lumpur), Guus Endeveld (Voorschoten), Amelia and Michael Glancey (Jakarta), the family of Jelly van der Laan and Wim van Nispen (The Hague), Fredrico Mazan (London), the family of Marianne and Nigel Moody (Breda), and the family of Nitia and Morwenna Nader (London).

Assistance with Dutch language materials has been provided by Professor S. O. Robson, while Naim Bedros and Khaled Abou-Elyousr both gave useful advice about difficult Arabic texts. Craig Smith explained the mystery of producing transliterated Arabic characters with my word-processing software, while Adrian Salter introduced me to the Macintosh computer. I am grateful for their help.

The staff at Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Publications, in particular Deborah Homsher and Erick White, have carefully guided this book into print. I am pleased to express my thanks to them here.

Finally, I am grateful to my parents, who believed their children should learn a second language, and who provided support at crucial times. My deepest gratitude, though, goes to my husband, Davood Mobini-Kesheh, who accompanied me on the journey, assisted the research in countless ways, and never failed to massage my feet.


Map of Hadramawt
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Wadi Daw'an
Wadi al'Ayn
Ghayl Ba Wazir
Shihr
Mukalla
Habban
Gulf of Aden
SAUDI ARABIA
Red Sea
OMAN
Al Rub' al Khali
See detailed map
San'a
Aden
Indian Ocean

INTRODUCTION

> On the day of our arrival in Batavia our hosts, the Acting Consul-General and Mrs. Lambert, gave a garden party. We were introduced to the guests as they arrived and I shook hands with one spruce clean-shaven young man in tussore suit, smart shoes, tie, and tarbush with no more than the smile one uses on such occasions. "But you know me," said he, "you know me very well, I'm Basha." He was a young chief of the Ja'da and the last time I had seen him had been in Hureidha [a town in Hadramawt]. He had a beard and long unkempt hair tumbling about his shoulders, he was covered in indigo, naked to the waist with just a loin cloth and silver dagger to cover him, and I was interviewing him about the shooting of a cousin.[1]

The experience of Basha, the young Hadrami tribesman whose acquaintance Harold Ingrams renewed on his visit to Batavia in 1939, represents the experience of many thousands of his countrymen. Originating from Hadramawt, a barren region in southern Arabia, the Hadramis have become known as the Phoenicians of the Middle East, a people with an almost proverbial love for travel.[2] For many centuries Hadramis had been leaving the shores of their impoverished homeland to form new communities along the Red Sea and the East African coast. From the late eighteenth century a new wave of migration propelled the Hadramis as far as the islands of Southeast Asia. Arriving in the Indies in the closing years of Dutch colonial rule, Basha would have joined a community of immigrant and locally born Hadramis nearly eighty thousand strong.

Migration, almost by definition, involves adaptation and change. Indeed, cutting his hair and replacing his loin cloth with a suit and tie would have been the least of the transformations required of Basha. Migration from Hadramawt to the Netherlands East Indies involved a transition from a barren, underpopulated land to a fertile, overpopulated one; from austere mud towns to cosmopolitan cities;

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[1] Harold and Doreen Ingrams, "The Hadhramaut in Time of War," *The Geographical Journal* 105,1/2 (January/February 1945): 10.

[2] The Arabic classic, *A Thousand and One Nights*, contains the tale of a Hadrami who fled from his homeland to an isolated region of China, only to happen upon a fellow countryman when he arrived. Cited in W. H. Ingrams, *A Report on the Social, Economic and Political Condition of the Hadhramaut* (London: Colonial No. 123, 1937): 142.

from an undeveloped subsistence economy where the only means of transport was the camel to a modern plantation economy with a rapidly expanding road and rail network. As the example of Basha illustrates, many individual Hadramis were skilled at casting off their tribal ways and adapting to life in the Indies. But for the Hadramis as a community, the questions of who they were, how they fitted into Indies society, and what was their relationship to their own homeland posed a more difficult challenge.

The challenge faced by the Hadramis in the Indies in the early twentieth century were far greater than the usual adaptations demanded of migrants. Basha arrived in the Indies at a time when questions of identity were particularly urgent and complex. The onset of modernity meant that even old certainties were being challenged. Does traditional social status matter? How can the religion of Islam be made relevant to the modern world? Is traditional education adequate for children raised in these changing times? Underlying all of these issues were new questions about the identity of the Hadramis and their place in the modern world. Were they to identify themselves as Muslims? Arabs? Hadramis? How should they relate to their homeland, and what of the new entity, Indonesia? Could these identities overlap? Were other forms of identity available to them? How the Hadramis responded to these questions is the theme of the following work. It will be seen that the period between 1900 and 1942, known to contemporary writers as the *nahḍah al-ḥaḍramīyyah* or Hadrami awakening, witnessed experimentation with a range of different responses. In one sense, what united the men of the awakening (and it was largely a male movement)[3] was not the fact that they found the same answer, but that they were all struggling with the same questions.

In the past decade historians have shown a renewed interest in exploring the changing ways in which Southeast Asians identified themselves and their communities during this period. Seeking to go beyond what they call the "master narrative" of nationalism which dominated histories written in the 1960s and 1970s, various scholars have adopted close analysis of language and texts as a technique which reveals the important shifts in indigenous patterns of understanding lying behind the construction of "national" communities in the early twentieth century. Thus Greg Lockhart has traced the rise of loyalty to "the people," rather than the monarch, as a new basis for articulating political and social identity in colonial Vietnam.[4] Similarly in Malaya, Ariffin Omar has shown how "the Malay race" became a new focus of identity and community which challenged the older loyalty to the Malay ruler.[5] More recently Anthony Milner has argued that the colonial period was characterized by competition between

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[3] Hadrami women played no public role in the awakening. Membership in the main Hadrami organizations was restricted to men, and women rarely wrote for the Arab press. While al-Irshad formed a women's wing in the 1930s (see chapter three below), very little is known about its members. It is therefore virtually impossible to trace the impact that the awakening had upon the lives of Hadrami women during this period. Some female children did receive modern-style education, but it was clearly directed towards equipping them for lives as housewives (see chapter four).

[4] Greg Lockhart, *Nation in Arms: The Origins of the People's Army of Vietnam* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989), chapter two. See also David Marr, *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), especially chapter three.

[5] Ariffin Omar, *Bangsa Melayu: Malay Concepts of Democracy and Community, 1945-1950* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1993).

three competing forms of community among the Malays: the sultanate, the Islamic community, and the Malay race.[6] In the case of Burma, Khin Yi has argued that the young men of the Dobama Asiayone (the "We Burmans" Association) actively promoted a sense of Burman racial superiority as a means of rallying the population against colonialism.[7]

One conclusion which can be drawn from all of these studies is that the challenges posed by the onset of modernity forced a fundamental reconsideration of the bases of identity and community in the various countries of Southeast Asia. The Hadramis were not alone in their quest for identity. On the contrary, their struggle mirrors, in an acute and complex way, the struggle of other Southeast Asians, and perhaps of all colonized peoples, to understand their place in a changing world. In all Southeast Asian societies, modernity brought with it new questions about leadership of the community, religious reform, education, the structure of society, and, most importantly, group identity. Like Basha, unprecedented numbers of local people were choosing, for the sake of "modernity," to abandon their national dress in favor of an unfamiliar costume.

While historians of other Southeast Asian countries have illuminated these changes through textual analysis, however, historians of Indonesia appear to have been less attracted by such an approach. Apart from the observations made by Benedict Anderson in his *Imagined Communities*—the book which, perhaps more than any other, has inspired other Southeast Asian historians to re-examine questions of identity[8]—and the work of Ariffin Omar in East Sumatra,[9] the complex changes in identity which underlay the birth of modern "Indonesia" have received little new attention since the 1970s, when the rise of nationalism was still viewed primarily as a subject for political scientists. Even Takashi Shiraishi's *An Age in Motion*, which reopened many questions about the late colonial period in Indonesia, was not particularly concerned with issues of identity. Shiraishi noted in passing a conflict between Indies nationalism and Javanese nationalism, for example, without pausing to consider the changing understandings of community which lay behind it.[10]

This study raises the question of identity in colonial Indonesia. It does so by considering the perspective of a community positioned, as it were, on the border of the Indonesian population. The relationship between the Hadramis and the wider Indonesian community has been a complex and changing one. At times the Hadramis have been accepted by Indonesians as Muslim brothers, while at other times they have been viewed as foreigners. During the period to be examined here, Hadrami identity both shaped, and was shaped by, patterns of identification in the wider Indies society. For example, the adoption of an ethnically defined nationalism among Indonesians from the mid-1910s featured an emphatic rejection

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[6] Anthony Milner, *The Invention of Politics in Colonial Malaya: Contesting Nationalism and the Expansion of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[7] Khin Yi, *The Dobama Movement in Burma (1930-1938)* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1988), chapter one.

[8] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 116-23.

[9] Omar, *Bangsa Melayu*, especially chapters three and five.

[10] Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 139.

of the Hadramis as "foreigners." This rejection, in turn, sharpened the Hadramis' sense of separateness from the local population, and was a decisive factor in compelling them to turn to their own homeland, Hadramawt, as the source of their identity. This pattern was reversed in the 1930s, when a group of young, Indies-born Hadramis elected to proclaim Indonesia as their homeland. Their efforts to gain acceptance by Indonesian nationalists led, in turn, to a broadening of the concept of "Indonesian."

In the course of tracing the changes in Hadrami identification, then, we learn much about Indonesian identity as well. One of the reasons for the relative neglect of the Hadrami community by modern scholars has been the assumption that study of a "minority" community like the Hadramis can be of little assistance in understanding the more important "majority." Even Yusof A. Talib, a scholar of the Hadramis in Southeast Asia, has argued that their newspapers are of little interest to the general study of Southeast Asia due to their largely "communal" concerns.[11] This work seeks to demonstrate that any such belief in the marginality of the Hadramis is unfounded. Indeed, the "border area" between communities may be the best place to begin a discussion of changing identities. It is in the gray area between acceptance and rejection that ambiguities are revealed, that distinctions are most finely drawn, and that subtle shifts in identity can first be discerned and examined. Despite the status of the Hadramis as a "minority" community, then—or maybe even because of it—Basha, the young Hadrami tribesman, reveals more about the "majority" than might be expected.

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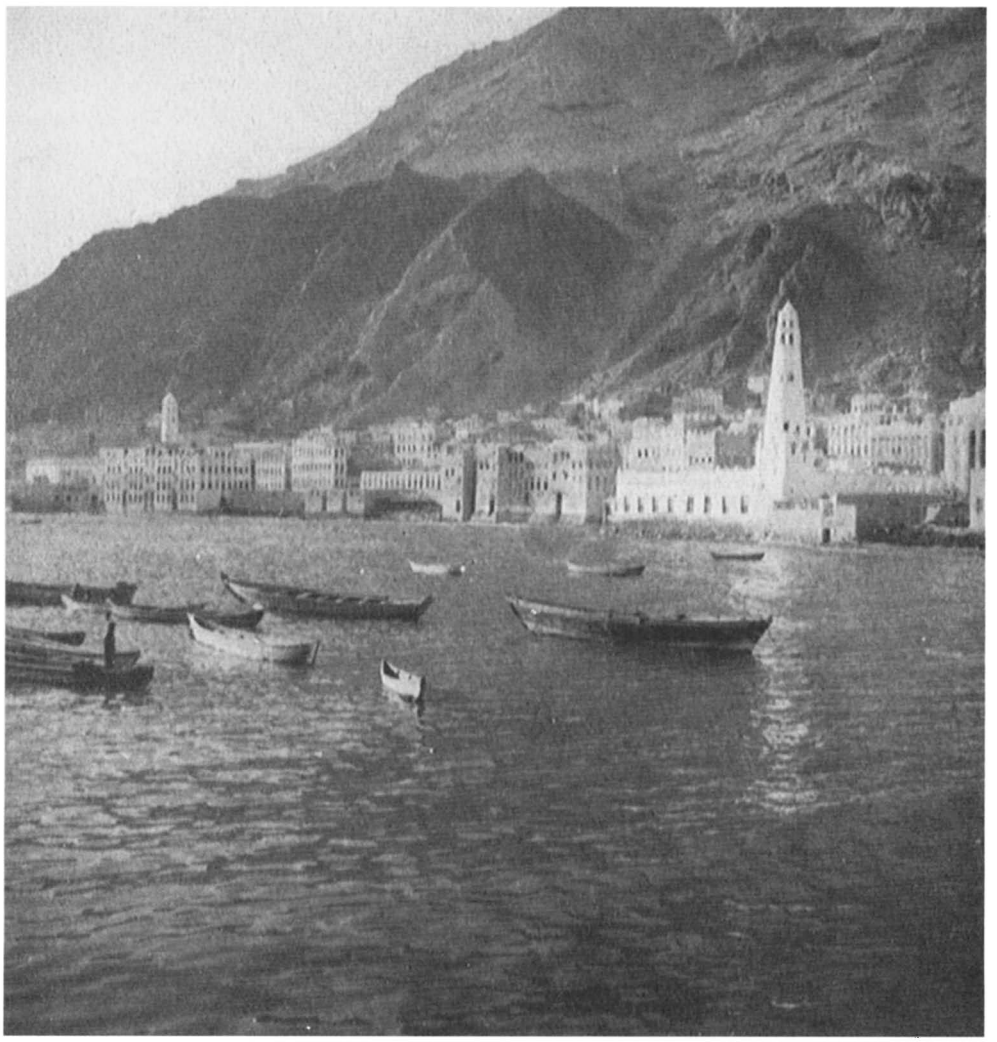
[11] Yusof A. Talib, review of William R. Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals in the Straits Settlements and Peninsular Malay States 1876-1941*, in *Journal of South East Asian Studies* 5,2 (September 1974): 280.



The harbor at Mukallā in Hadramawt, circa 1939
(Photo by D. van der Meulen)

CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIGINS OF THE HADRAMI COMMUNITY IN THE INDIES

The region known as Hadramawt occupies a corner of south-west Arabia running from about forty-seven to fifty-one degrees East. Today forming a province of the Republic of Yemen, Hadramawt has, for much of its history, been cut off from the rest of Arabia by the Rub' Al-Khālī or Empty Quarter, a vast expanse of desert to its north. As a result, the Hadramis, perched on the edge of the Indian Ocean, have looked to the south and the east for economic and cultural contacts. Hadrami maritime trade appears to have arisen in about the fifth century BC.[1] After experiencing a decline from around 300 AD, it revived following the arrival of Islam in southern Arabia. From at least the tenth century AD, Hadrami merchants again journeyed to east Africa, western India, and ultimately to Southeast Asia, seeking trade and a livelihood which their own homeland could not provide.[2]

Hadramawt is divided into two regions. The coastline, containing the two major towns of Mukallā and Shiḥr, forms the gateway to the Indian Ocean. It is separated by a stretch of rocky mountains from the interior, which consists of a number of stony plateaus incised with a series of deep valleys, or *wadis*. The most important of these is the Wadi Hadramawt, from which the region has taken its name. Wadi Hadramawt is a valley running approximately parallel to the southern coast of Arabia along the line sixteen degrees North. It is about two hundred kilometers long and ranges in width from over fifteen kilometers at its westernmost point to two kilometers at its eastern end. The most fertile and populous valley of Hadramawt, it contains the major towns of Shibām, Say'ūn, and Tarīm, and has been viewed traditionally as the repository of Hadrami culture and learning. Several other major valleys, the most important of which are the *wadis* Al 'Ayn, Daw'an, and 'Amd, run south and southwest across Wadi Hadramawt. Due to the importance of the Indian Ocean trade for the prosperity of the region,

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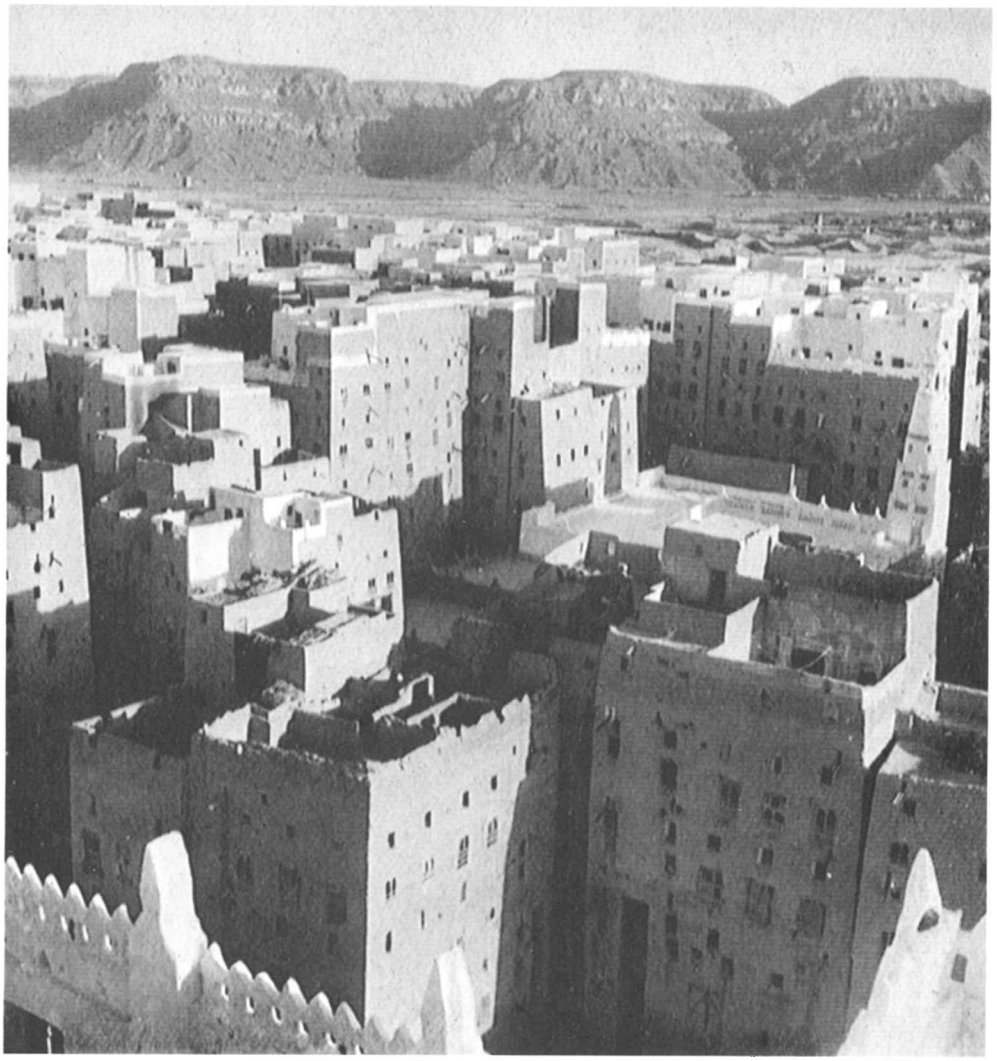
[1] G. R. Tibbetts, "Pre-Islamic Arabia and South-East Asia," *JMBRAS* 29,3 (1956): 193.

[2] On the spread of Hadramis around the Indian Ocean, see B. G. Martin, "Migrations from the Hadramawt to East Africa and Indonesia, c. 1200 to 1900," *Research Bulletin* 7,1/2 (December 1971): 1-21; Andrew D. W. Forbes, "Southern Arabia and the Islamicisation of the Central Indian Ocean Archipelagoes," *Archipel* 21 (1981): 55-91; Francoise Le Guennec-Coppens, "Social and Cultural Integration: A Case Study of the East African Hadramis," *Africa* 59,2 (1989): 185-95; and Omar Khalidi, "The Arabs of Hadramawt, South Yemen in Hyderabad," *Islam and the Modern Age* 18,4 (November 1987): 203-29.



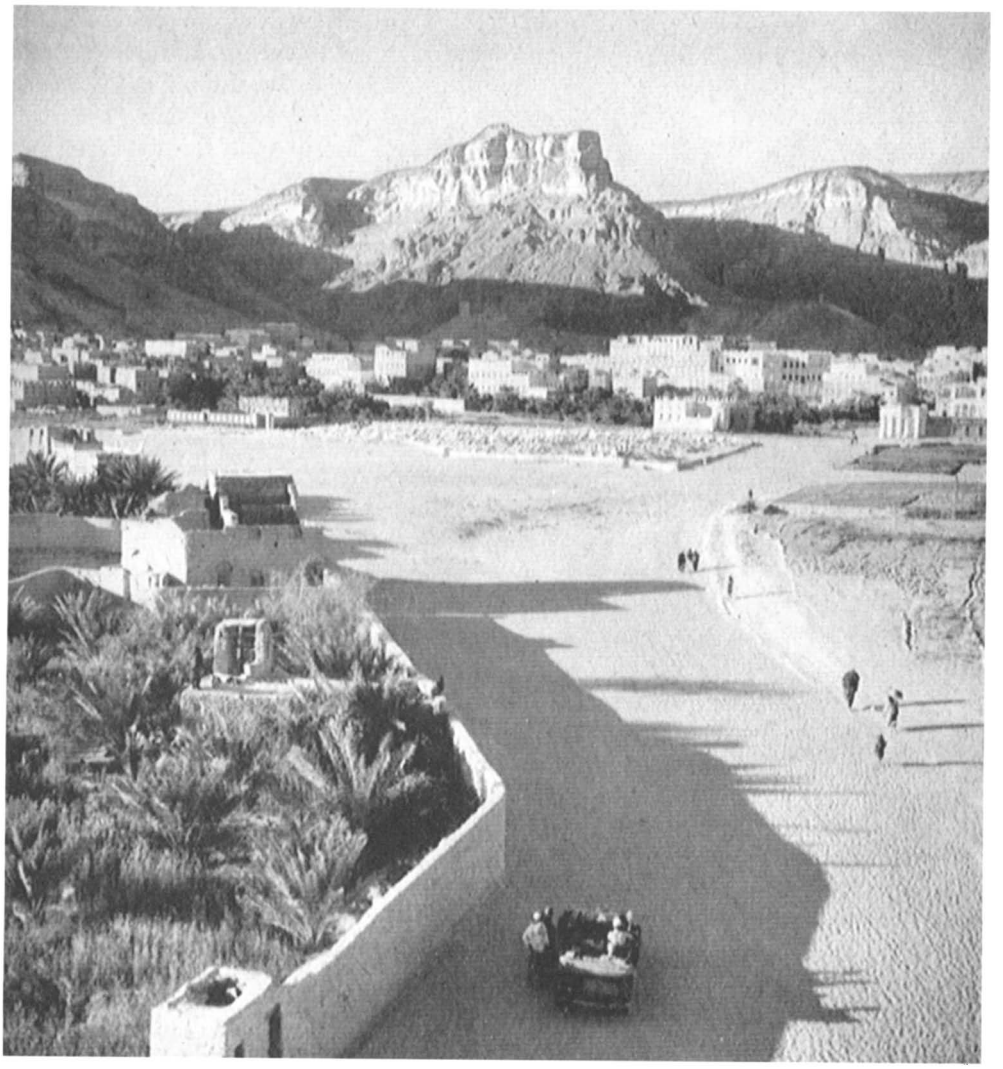
The city of Shibām in Hadramawt, circa 1939
(Photo by D. van der Meulen)

these valleys have long depended on access to the ocean for their economic survival, and control over one or both of the ports has been the goal of many hard-fought tribal conflicts.[3]

The coastline and interior share a severe climate marked by days of extreme heat and, particularly in the elevated plateau regions, cold nights. Rainfall is light and infrequent: two heavy rainfalls would characterize a good year,

[3] Salma Samar Damluji, *The Valley of Mud Brick Architecture: Shibam, Tarim and Wadi Hadramut* (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1992), pp. 34-44.

although it is not unknown for no rain to fall from one year to the next. Most of the land of Hadramawt consists of barren rock, with agriculture only possible in valleys where there is an underground water supply. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the only agricultural crops of commercial value were Ḥamūmī tobacco, grown around the town of Ghayl Bā Wazīr near Shiḥr, and honey produced in the Wadi Daw'an. Other crops for domestic use included dates, millet, lucerne, sesame, and wheat. Some vegetables such as sweet potatoes, onions, garlic, pumpkins, and carrots were grown in small quantities; and fruits included limes,



The city of Tarīm in Hadramawt, circa 1939
(Photo by D. van der Meulen)

bananas, and pawpaws. The major remaining domestic food source was fish. It is clear that external trade, rather than domestic production, has always been essential to support the population of the region.[4]

Hadramawt has been largely autonomous for most of its history. In recent centuries the Ottoman Turks and the Imams of Yemen made some claim to authority over the region, but their claims were rarely enforced. From the mid-nineteenth century, the urban centers of the region were governed by two families: the Kathīrī, who ruled the towns of Wadi Hadramawt east of Shibām with their seat of government in Say'ūn, and the Qu'ayṭī, rulers in the coastal towns of Mukallā and Shiḥr and the interior town of Shibām. Areas outside the main urban centers, however, continued to be dominated by competing tribes over which neither sultan had direct control.[5]

Following the occupation of Aden in 1839, British authorities recognized the Qu'ayṭī ruler as the paramount chief of the Hadramawt. In 1888 a protectorate treaty was concluded between the Aden authorities and the Qu'ayṭī, by which Britain extended "protection" in return for control over Qu'ayṭī foreign relations.[6] The main British interest in Hadramawt was to ensure that no other foreign power could use it as a foothold on the Arabian peninsula. No attempts were made to intervene directly in the government of the region for many years. In 1918 Aden pressured the Kathīrī rulers into signing the Qu'ayṭī-Kathīrī Agreement, in which it was agreed that Hadramawt formed one province under the Qu'ayṭī ruler (although the authority of the Kathīrī in their own territory was recognized). The agreement bound the Kathīrī to the 1888 treaty and declared Hadramawt to be "an appanage of the British Empire." But the British motive continued to be limited to the exclusion of other foreign powers from the region.

The first attempt by the British to intervene actively in the affairs of Hadramawt came in the mid-1930s. In 1934 the Aden authorities sent W. H. Ingrams, the First Political Officer for the Aden Protectorate, to Hadramawt to investigate the internal conditions of the country and to report on the potential of the adoption of a more "forward" policy. His subsequent visits resulted in the conclusion, in 1937, of a Hadramawt-wide peace treaty, which implicitly recognized the fragmentation of political authority by collecting the signatures of more than 1300 tribal authorities.[7] "Ingrams' Peace" was followed by the conclusion of fresh treaties between the British and the Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī rulers. According to these treaties, which were modeled on the British agreements with the rulers of the Unfederated Malay States, both rulers accepted Ingrams as their Resident Adviser whose advice must be accepted "in all matters except those concerning Muhammadan religion and custom."[8] These treaties remained the basis of government in Hadramawt until the British withdrawal from Aden in 1967, after which Hadramawt was incorporated into the People's Democratic Republic

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[4] W. H. Ingrams, *A Report on the Social, Economic and Political Condition of the Hadhramaut* (London: Colonial No. 123, 1937), pp. 8-9 and 50-56.

[5] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[6] Full text of the treaty is contained in ibid., p. 169.

[7] W. H. Ingrams, "Peace in the Hadhramaut," *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* 25 (1938): 521.

[8] W. H. Ingrams, "Political Development in the Hadhramaut," *International Affairs* 21,2 (April 1945): 237.

of Yemen. Since the union of North and South Yemen in 1990, Hadramawt has formed a province in the Republic of Yemen.

HADRAMI MIGRATION TO THE INDIES AND THE ROLE OF ISLAM

A regular trading route between southern Arabia and the islands of Southeast Asia appears to have existed as early as the seventh century AD.[9] Accounts by European and Arab travelers to Southeast Asia report the presence of small settlements of Arab merchants in the major trading centers from the thirteenth century onwards. These individuals cannot, however, be identified with certainty as Hadrami.[10] The first substantial waves of Hadrami migration to Southeast Asia occurred in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Hadrami men, lured by the tales of fortunes to be made, journeyed in their thousands to the islands of Southeast Asia. It appears that the Hadramis landed first in Aceh, from where they moved to Palembang in south Sumatra or Pontianak on the island of Borneo. From about 1820 onwards, substantial colonies of Hadramis emerged in the major trading centers along the north coast of Java. Settlements of Hadramis in the eastern portion of the Indonesian archipelago can be dated from about 1870.[11]

The earliest census figures that indicate the number of Hadramis living in the Netherlands East Indies date from 1859, when it was found that there were 4,992 Arab men, women, and children living in Java and Madura, with an additional 2,776 residing in the outer islands then under Dutch control, totaling 7,768 in the colony (Aceh, not yet subdued by the Dutch, is not included in these figures).[12] Although the census data refers to Arabs generally, the vast majority originated from Hadramawt.[13] The census of 1870 recorded a total of 12,412 Arabs: 7,495 living in Java and Madura and 4,917 residing in Dutch-controlled outer islands. Following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the introduction of steam shipping between Arabia and the Indies, the rate of Hadrami migration increased substantially. This increase is reflected in the census figures for 1885, which indicate that there were now 20,501 Arabs living in the colony: 10,888 in Java and Madura and 9,613 in the outer islands, representing increases of 45 percent and 96 percent respectively in the fifteen-year period since 1870.[14] The rate of growth remained rapid for the remainder of the colonial period, buoyed by a high rate of natural increase as well as continued migration. The Arabs numbered 27,399 in 1900, 44,902 in 1920, and 71,335 in 1930, the year of the last official census before World War Two. It has been estimated that there were close to eighty thousand Arabs in the Indies immediately prior to the Japanese occupation in 1942.[15]

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[9] Tibbetts, "Pre-Islamic Arabia," p. 207.

[10] J. A. E. Morley, "The Arabs and the Eastern Trade," *JMBRAS* 22,1 (1949): 154-5.

[11] L. W. C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1886), pp. 104-22.

[12] The following census data is taken from ibid., pp. 105-9.

[13] Ibid., pp. 107-9.

[14] The rate of growth for the outer islands is inflated by the inclusion of Aceh in the census for the first time.

[15] Huub de Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity among the Arabs in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942," *Indonesia* 55 (April 1993): 74-5.

The majority of the migrants originated from Kathīrī territory, and in particular from the stretch of the Wadi Hadramawt between the towns of Shibām and Tarīm.[16] On arriving in the Indies they usually settled in an area where they found relatives or other migrants from the same village. As well as creating a sense of familiarity and community, this close contact was vital for seeking employment.[17] Virtually all of the Hadrami migrants supported themselves through trade. Van den Berg described the typical pattern in the late nineteenth century: a new arrival in the Indies would work as a shop assistant or small trader on behalf of a relative or acquaintance already resident in the colony. As soon as he had earned sufficient capital he would become an independent trader working, like his more numerous Chinese counterparts, as a middleman, buying imported goods from large European firms and reselling them to other traders or Indonesian consumers. Almost invariably the main commodity in which he dealt would be textiles, especially cotton. Other commodities traded might have included European manufactured goods such as watches and iron and steel products, and Middle Eastern goods such as dates, ghee, prayer beads, and, increasingly in the twentieth century, books. If he lived in certain areas in the outer islands he might also take up trade in particular local items, such as jungle produce and horses. Once he had accumulated sufficient capital he would, despite the Qur'anic injunction against usury, begin to lend it out at a high rate of interest. If he was among the lucky few he might, after years of hard work, grow sufficiently wealthy to invest in property in one of the major cities in the Indies and join the ranks of the proverbial Arab landlords.[18]

This pattern of the Hadrami trader probably holds true well into the twentieth century. Notes compiled on the period from 1912 to 1919 show that, despite the disruption caused by the First World War, a total of 1,121 Hadramis applied for admission to Java. About 75 percent were traders who possessed, on arrival in the Indies, between one hundred and 1,500 guilders in cash as well as trading goods (chiefly the famed Daw'an honey) valued from one hundred to 1200 guilders. A further 18 percent had the guaranteed support of family members already living in the Indies, through whom they could gain access to trading capital. Only 7 percent were arriving without capital or the means to obtain it through family members.[19] These figures confirm that, by the early twentieth century, the majority of migrants possessed some money or family connections in the Indies.

From their arrival the Hadramis appear to have integrated easily into local society. Indeed, van den Berg argued that most Hadramis were completely assimilated into indigenous society within three or four generations.[20] Several factors facilitated this process. First, the overwhelming majority of Hadrami migrants were men. A cultural taboo on women traveling ensured that virtually no Hadrami woman left the shores of Hadramawt. As a result, there was an

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[16] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 124.

[17] It was also in accordance with the government requirement, discussed below, that Hadramis reside in designated quarters of each city.

[18] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, pp. 134-58.

[19] Director of Justice to Governor-General, April 26, 1919, mr. 1015/19, located in vb. June 28, 1919, no. 16, MK, ARA.

[20] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, pp. 215-18.

extremely high rate of intermarriage between Hadrami migrants and indigenous women, who provided their husbands with a bridge into local society. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Hadramis were able, through judicious marriages, to form alliances with ruling families in several parts of the archipelago. Peter Carey has discovered the marriages of certain Hadramis into important Javanese aristocratic families in the early nineteenth century.[21] The same pattern can be observed in the Malay states of Perak and Siak.[22] In Pontianak (Kalimantan) and Sumba in the Lesser Sunda Islands, such marriages formed the springboard for Hadrami adventurers to establish their own sultanates.[23] Hadramis referred to the children of such mixed marriages as *muwallad* (half-blood), to distinguish them from the *aqḥāḥ* or *wulāyatī* (pure) Arabs. *Muwallads* quickly formed the majority of the Hadrami community.[24]

Islam was the crucial factor in the conclusion of such advantageous marriages. As most writers on the Hadramis have pointed out, it was the fact that the migrants professed the same religion as the indigenous population which made successful integration far easier than it was in the case of, say, the Indies Chinese.[25] Particularly in the port cities of the Indies, where there existed a large cosmopolitan Muslim trading community, Islam was a powerful unifying force. The Hadramis joined Indians, Javanese, Minangkabau, and others in a community which was bound together by the ties of faith as well as by shared commercial interests. Differences of origin appear to have been subsumed by the overarching common identity of Islam. Hence the Hadramis were viewed not so much as "foreigners," but as members of the broad worldwide community of Islam.

The career of the Hadrami Sayyid 'Abdurraḥmān al-Zāhir in late nineteenth-century Aceh, the kingdom on the northern tip of Sumatra, is instructive in this context. Born in the Hadrami town of Tarīm and educated in Egypt and Mecca, al-Zāhir arrived in Aceh in 1864 after leaving the employ of the Sultan of the Malay state of Johore.[26] On the basis of his claim to Islamic learning, he was immediately placed in charge of the Great Mosque in the Acehnese capital. From this position he enjoyed a rapid rise to prominence, becoming co-regent of the young Acehnese Sultan, and perhaps the most powerful man in the state, a bare six years later. Until 1878 al-Zāhir played a major role in Acehnese attempts to ward off the Dutch colonizers, even visiting Constantinople in an effort to gain Ottoman support for

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[21] Peter Carey, "Satria and Santri: Some Notes on the Relationship between Dipanegara's Kraton and Religious Supporters during the Java War (1825-1830)," in *Dari Babad dan Hikayat sampai Sejarah Kritis*, ed. Alfian et al. (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1987), p. 315.

[22] R. O. Winstedt, "The Hadramaut Saiyids of Perak and Siak," *JSBRAS* 79 (September 1918): 49-54

[23] B. G. Martin, "Arab Migrations to East Africa in Medieval Times," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 7,3 (1975): 385-6.

[24] The statistics provided by van den Berg indicate that a consistent proportion of about two-thirds of the Hadrami population was born in the Indies.

[25] Charles A. Coppel, "Arab and Chinese Minority Groups in Java," *Southeast Asia Ethnicity and Development Newsletter* 3,2 (May 1979): 11.

[26] Anthony Reid, *The Contest for North Sumatra: Atjeh, the Netherlands and Britain, 1858-1898* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 81-3; also, by the same author, "Habib Abdur-Rahman Az-Zahir," *Indonesia* 13 (April 1972): 37-59. I have assumed that al-Zāhir's reported place of birth, Temir, is a mistake for Tarīm.

Aceh's cause. His outstanding success in becoming a major political player in Aceh reflects the points made above. It is clear that he identified first and foremost as a Muslim. In the words of Reid:

> His whole life was a testimony to Islamic internationalism . . . [he] made clear time and again that he acknowledged no loyalty to any particular country or people but only to the house of Islam, of which he was an aristocrat.[27]

Islam served a double purpose for the Hadramis. Not only did the shared religion provide many common ideas and customs (the annual fast, communal worship, and so forth), but also where their social and cultural practices differed from those of locals, these differences were often perceived by indigenous Muslims in a positive light. Charles Coppel has made the point that, in contrast to the Chinese, "elements of 'foreignness' remaining amongst the Arabs . . . may be highly valued by the *santri* [devout Muslim] Javanese."[28] Since the Hadramis were Arabs, the original people of Islam, their customs could be perceived as more virtuous than local ones. To take the most obvious example, the Hadramis spoke a foreign language, Arabic. But since Arabic was the language of the *Qur'an*, many indigenous Muslims also strove to learn it. In some sense all Muslims would regard the Arabic language as "ours," and the Hadramis knew "our" language better than anyone else. In the same way, maintaining a continuing connection with the Arabian peninsula did not suggest disloyalty to the Indies; it suggested loyalty to the cradle of Islam which was also "ours."[29] Thus even where there were differences, they would be perceived positively by indigenous Muslims. The success of al-Zāhir reflects the fact that Islam provided a powerful sense of shared identity between the Hadramis and local Muslims. He was accepted by the Acehnese as a fellow Muslim, while his distinctive "Arab" traits, such as the ability to speak Arabic and his connections in the Middle East, only served to enhance his prospects in a Muslim kingdom.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND THE RISE OF A NEW HADRAMI ELITE

From the late nineteenth century it is possible to trace the rise of a new elite among the Hadramis in the Indies.[30] Its emergence was made possible by the social conditions of the colony, which undermined the highly stratified system by which Hadrami society was ordered. The population of Hadramawt was traditionally

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[27] Reid, "Habib Abdur-Rahman Az-Zahir," p. 37.

[28] Coppel, "Arab and Chinese," p. 13.

[29] In this crucial sense, the Hadramis differ from the conventional understanding of a "middleman minority" which has been defined, among others, by Edna Bonacich. Bonacich argues that one of the factors which makes a host society inevitably hostile towards a middleman minority is social and cultural difference. In the case of the Hadramis, this assumption is inappropriate on two counts: first, Islam provided a basis for solidarity with the host population. Secondly, where the Hadramis were different in social and cultural terms, the difference was a source of respect rather than hostility. Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Middleman Minorities," *American Sociological Review* 38 (October 1973): 583-94.

[30] Sumit Mandal, "Finding their Place: A History of Arabs in Java under Dutch Rule, 1800-1924" (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1994), chapter five.

divided according to what Bujra has termed an "ascriptive system of social stratification" which affected "almost every aspect of social life," including occupation.[31] This stratification system ranked different groups of the population according to their descent from more or less illustrious ancestors. These social divisions were maintained by a strict interpretation of the Islamic legal principle of *kafā'ah* (equivalence or suitability), according to which women were only permitted to marry men who were regarded as at least their social equivalent; that is, who belonged to the same social stratum or a higher one.[32] At the apex of society were the *sayyids*, a social and religious elite which claimed descent from the Prophet Muḥammad through his grandson Ḥusayn. The *sayyids* of Hadramawt claim as their common ancestor Aḥmad bin 'Isā al-Muḥājir (the Emigrant), an eighth-generation descendant of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭimah. Originally of Basrah in Iraq, he entered Hadramawt in 952 AD. On the basis of their noble descent the *sayyids* came to be respected in Hadramawt as teachers of Islam and as mediators in tribal disputes, a role which was enhanced by their refusal to carry arms. Many *sayyids* were considered to have supernatural powers, and the tombs of famous *sayyid* holy men became popular places of pilgrimage and ritual activity.[33] The high social status of the *sayyids* was recognized by the exclusive use of the titles *sayyid* (which literally means "lord") and *ḥabīb* (beloved), as well as by customs such as the kissing of their hands, and the absolute prohibition on marriage between the daughter of a *sayyid* and a member of any lower stratum.[34]

The second level of the stratification system was occupied by the *mashā'ikh* (scholars) and *qabā'il* (tribesmen). It appears that the *mashā'ikh* formed the original religious leadership of Hadramawt, but were pushed aside by the *sayyids* following the arrival of the latter in the region. They were nevertheless regarded as possessing hereditary virtue and continued to perform a religious role similar, but inferior, to that of the *sayyids*, including the conduct of religious ceremonies. *Mashā'ikh* families were usually descended from a famous saint whose tomb they maintained. The *qabā'il*, although roughly equivalent to the *mashā'ikh* in status, performed a very different social role. They constituted the mutually competitive tribes which occupied and controlled most of the countryside, carried arms, and were considered less devout. The quality which they esteemed most highly was the possession of *sharaf* (honor) which was linked to the ability to bear weapons

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[31] A. S. Bujra, "Political Conflict and Stratification in Hadramaut (I)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 3,4 (July 1967): 355-75. On the stratification system see also R. B. Serjeant, "South Arabia," in *Commoners, Climbers and Notables: A Sampler of Studies on Social Ranking in the Middle East*, ed. C. A. O. van Nieuwenhuijze (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), pp. 226-47. The following account is based on these two sources. An alternative view, which questions the extent to which this system applied generally throughout Hadramawt, is found in Sylvaine Camelin, "Reflections on the System of Social Stratification in Hadhramaut," in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 147-56.

[32] In comparison with the rest of the Islamic world, the Hadrami interpretation of *kafā'ah* was "extreme." See Farhat J. Ziadeh, "Equality (*Kafa'ah*) in the Muslim Law of Marriage," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 6 (1957): 503-17, especially pp. 515-16. The principle is discussed in more detail in chapter five.

[33] On the worship of saints in Hadramawt see Alexander Knysh, "The Cult of Saints in Hadramawt: An Overview," *New Arabian Studies* 1 (1993): 137-52.

[34] For a full description see R. B. Serjeant, "The Saiyids of Hadramawt," reproduced in his *Studies in Arabian History and Civilisation* (London: Valiorum Reprints, 1981).

and defend oneself and one's dependents. The Kathīrī and Qu'ayṭī families both belonged to the *qabā'il* stratum.

The third rung of the stratification system was occupied by the *masākīn* (poor or sedentary) and *ḍu`afā'* (weak) classes, who were unable to trace their descent to an illustrious ancestor. This was a large group divided into numerous occupational categories. According to Serjeant, this stratum should more properly be divided into two hierarchical classes: *masākīn*, consisting of merchants, artisans, and craftsmen, followed by *ḍu`afā'* or workers in clay (builders, potters, and field laborers). The *masākīn* and *ḍu`afā'* comprised the majority of the population of the villages and towns of Hadramawt. As unarmed urban dwellers they required the political protection of the higher classes. Lowest of all in the stratification system were slaves, who were considered to be of African descent and therefore not even Arabs.

There is no agreement on the question of the social origins of the Hadrami migrants to the Indies.[35] What is clear, however, is that there were some migrants from all strata of Hadrami society. "Peasants, merchants, and mercenaries were assorted with the men of the local 'holy families'—*sayyids*, *sharifs*, and *mashā'ikh*."[36] The fact that these *sayyids*, *mashā'ikh*, *qabā'il*, and *masākīn* all worked as traders was an implicit challenge to the traditional assumption that there was a fixed relationship between descent, occupation, and status. Although some writers maintain that the rigid Hadrami social structure was transplanted to the Indies *in toto* and remained intact well into the twentieth century,[37] it seems clear that the system was already collapsing late in the nineteenth century. Van den Berg observed in 1886 that social relations between the Hadramis were in a state of flux. Being a *sayyid*, he reported, was no longer a guarantee of high status. Many *sayyids* complained to him that the Hadramis from other classes had forgotten their duties towards the descendants of the Prophet.[38]

The colonial government hastened this breakdown of the traditional stratification system by its willingness to appoint prominent non-*sayyids* as heads of their local Arab communities. When the Arab population of a city grew large enough to warrant it, the government would appoint a prominent individual as an Arab "officer." The first of these appointments appears to have taken place in Semarang in 1819, and it was followed by many others during the course of the nineteenth century.[39] The Arab officer was given the title of *Hoofd der Arabieren* (Head of the Arabs) or awarded a military title such as *Luitenant* or *Kapitein*. His role, similar to that of the better-known Chinese officers, was to provide liaison between his community and the government, to provide statistical information and advice to the government on issues related to the Arabs, to disseminate government regulations and decrees, and to ensure the maintenance of law and order.[40] More

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[35] Van der Kroef felt that the majority were *masākīn* while de Jonge, following Bujra, suggests that *sayyids* formed the majority. Van den Berg is uncharacteristically silent on this point, remarking only that the migrants did not belong to the wealthiest section of Hadrami society. Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Arabs in Indonesia," *The Middle East Journal* 7 (Summer 1953): 305; de Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity," p. 77; and van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 123.

[36] Martin, "Migrations from the Hadramawt," p. 2.

[37] De Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity," p. 78.

[38] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 189.

[39] Ibid., pp. 111-22.

[40] On the role of Arab officers see Mandal, "Finding their Place," pp. 70-82. An illuminating article on the Chinese officers, with whom some comparisons can be drawn, is G. William

than half of the Arab officers appointed by the colonial government were non-*sayyids*.[41] This practice of placing a non-*sayyid* in a position of authority over *sayyids* helped to undermine traditional Hadrami assumptions about social status.

In the vacuum caused by this breakdown of the traditional stratification system by the late nineteenth century, a new Hadrami elite emerged. Membership was based on wealth and learning rather than on descent: its members were traders and property owners who had made their fortunes during the course of the century. Although many were *sayyids*, a substantial minority originated from other strata of Hadrami society. Biographical details of two leading figures in the Batavian Hadrami community, one *sayyid* and one non-*sayyid*, indicate the diverse origins of this new group. The *sayyid*, 'Abdullāh bin 'Alwi al-'Aṭṭās, was born in Batavia to a wealthy family around 1850.[42] In his youth he journeyed to Mecca where he received his education. Following a period of travel in the Middle East, India, the Straits Settlements, and Australia, he returned to Java. By the late nineteenth century he was one of the wealthiest Hadramis in Batavia, with considerable property holdings around the city. Renowned for his modern ideas, 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās sent his four sons to Turkey and Egypt to receive their education, rather than to Hadramawt or Mecca as was traditionally the case. All four completed their studies in Europe (France, Belgium, Holland, and England) in engineering, medicine, and commerce, thereby receiving a more advanced western education than was available in the colony.[43] 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās was a founder or supporter of various Hadrami school organizations, and also founded his own school, known as the al-'Aṭṭās school, in 1914. He died in 1929.

Whereas al-'Aṭṭās was a modernizing member of the traditional Hadrami elite, Shaykh 'Umar bin Yūsuf Manqūsh[44] was born to a non-elite family in Hadramawt.[45] Apparently not well educated, he traveled to Java in his youth.

Skinner, "Overseas Chinese Leadership: Paradigm for a Paradox," in *Leadership and Authority: A Symposium*, ed. Gehan Wijeyewardene (Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1968), pp. 191-207.

[41] A full list of Arab heads from 1900 to 1942 is found in Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), pp. 455-59. Out of the 128 names listed, seventy-five (59 percent) are non-*sayyids* and fifty-three (41 percent) *sayyids*.

[42] The following data on al-'Aṭṭās has been taken from his obituary, published as "Wafāh al-Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin 'Alwī al-'Aṭṭās," *Ḥaḍramawt*, June 15, 1929, and "Al-Sayyid al-Marḥūm 'Abdullāh bin 'Alwī al-'Aṭṭās," *Ḥaḍramawt*, June 29, 1929. Further information was obtained from Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL; and an interview with Hamid Algadri, Jakarta, January 17, 1994.

[43] Two of these sons were later appointed as members of the Volksraad (Indies parliament): Ismā'īl (1918-1920) and Muḥammad (1931-1935). According to Hamid Algadri, even his daughters were taught English and how to play the piano, extraordinary skills for Hadrami women of their time. Interview with Hamid Algadri, Jakarta, January 17, 1994.

[44] According to traditional usage in Hadramawt, the title *shaykh* was applied to the class of non-*sayyid* religious scholars. In the Indies, however, all non-*sayyid* Arabs came to adopt the title. The latter usage is adopted here to provide consistency with primary sources. It also enables convenient distinction between *sayyids* and non-*sayyids*.

[45] Information on Manqūsh was obtained from *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936*, ed. E. Gobee and C. Adriaanse (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), vol. 2, pp. 1555-8; Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL; Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," pp. 163-6; "Pesta Kawin," *Neratja*, July 26, 1921, p. l; and an interview with Hussein Badjerei, Jakarta, January 31, 1994.

Beginning as a small trader, he worked his way up to become a wealthy merchant and property-owner by the turn of the century. In 1902 he was appointed as the *Kapitein* of the Arabs in Batavia, a position he held until 1931. In 1921 he was awarded the title of Knight of the Order of Orange Nassau, a clear sign of Dutch government favor. Manqūsh enjoyed good relations with Europeans in government and business circles. Almost all of his business dealings were conducted with Europeans, and his invitation of Europeans to the wedding of his daughter in 1921 caused a controversy within the Hadrami community. Manqūsh was proud of his achievements and famed for his refusal to be looked down upon by anyone, whether *sayyid* or European.[46] Snouck Hurgronje wrote in 1901 that Manqūsh had "the manners of a parvenu," a judgment which was perhaps proved accurate a few years later when he refused to kiss the hand of a *sayyid*, thereby arousing considerable debate within the Hadrami community.[47] Manqūsh was a key supporter of the educational organization al-Irshad from its foundation. He died around 1948.

In Hadramawt, two men with the social origins of al-'Aṭṭās and Manqūsh would have been unlikely to meet or to have anything in common. In the late nineteenth century Indies, however, they both belonged to the newly emergent Hadrami leadership. Both were successful traders and land-owners with common interests. They also shared a modern outlook. The travels of al-'Aṭṭās, and the extensive European contacts of Manqūsh, had convinced them both that the key to success was to embrace modern western-style education and technology. As we shall see, they were typical of the men who led the Hadrami "awakening" from the first decade of the twentieth century.

THE EMERGENCE OF ARAB-NESS

In the previous section, we described 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās and 'Umar Manqūsh as leaders in a new Hadrami elite. A question must be raised, however, as to whether they would have defined themselves in the same way. Did they consider themselves to be Hadramis, Arabs, Muslims, or something else? Earlier in the nineteenth century, the answer seems fairly clear: Hadramis in the Indies adhered to a kind of "Islamic internationalism" which favored a religious sense of identity over a national or racial one. But by the 1890s the answer was more problematic.

The earliest public expression by members of the new elite of their position in the Indies can be found in a series of letters published in Middle Eastern newspapers in the 1890s. These letters appeared in the context of the pan-Islamic movement, which focused on the importance of overall Muslim unity and proposed

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[46] Many anecdotes, some perhaps apocryphal, have been circulated about the pride and arrogance of 'Umar Manqūsh. According to one, Manqūsh once accidentally broke the glass window of a tram with his walking stick. The conductor approached him threateningly and demanded the large sum of twenty-five guilders to pay for repairing the window. Manqūsh calmly handed over a new fifty guilder note. The conductor gulped and nervously requested time to count his takings, which were perhaps not sufficient for the change. "Keep the change to pay for this one," replied Manqūsh, raising his stick and breaking a second window. Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," pp. 164-5.

[47] On the significance of this incident, see "Ḥawl al-Ḥaḍārimah wa nahḍatihim," *Al-Dahnā'*, May 1928, p. 3. It is discussed again in chapter five.

ways and means to achieve this end.[48] While the notion of Muslim solidarity has been present in Islam since its earliest days, the modern pan-Islamic movement received organizational form during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876-1909). Its central pillar was the claim that Abdulhamid, the ruler of the most powerful independent Muslim country, was the Caliph of all Muslims, to whom they owed allegiance. Partly in order to compensate for the recent territorial losses of the empire, and to bolster his prestige before various European powers, Abdulhamid assumed a role as the protector of the world-wide Islamic community. All Muslims were to be united under his leadership. The pan-Islamic movement was fostered by Abdulhamid through a range of official and unofficial channels, as well as by independent propagandists such as Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, the movement's "best-known and most powerful personality."[49]

The movement appears to have found an instant response among the Hadramis in the Indies, who learned of Pan-Islamic ideas through the Ottoman-sponsored Arabic press of the Middle East.[50] Many Hadramis subscribed to Abdulhamid's most important Arabic propaganda organ, the newspaper *Al-Jawā'ib*.[51] As early as 1873, a group of forty Hadramis wrote to the Ottoman Sultan requesting the appointment of an Ottoman representative in the colony, to whom local Muslims could appeal for assistance in dealing with the colonial government.[52] From 1883, when the first Ottoman consul to the Indies was appointed, Ottoman officials in Batavia fostered pan-Islamic sentiment by encouraging local Muslims in the belief that Abdulhamid was their Caliph and protector.[53] They appear to have achieved particular success among the Hadramis who, encouraged by the Ottoman Consul Kamil Bey, embarked on a kind of pan-Islamic press campaign of their own.

From 1897 onwards, Dutch authorities in Java were alarmed to note a spate of letters in Middle Eastern newspapers attacking their rule in the Indies. The letters first appeared in the Beirut weekly *Thamarāt al-Funūn* in 1897, and quickly spread to the Istanbul papers *Ma'lūmāt* and *Servet*, and the Egyptian periodicals *Al-Mu'ayyad*, *Miṣbāḥ al-Sharq*, *'Ālam al-Islām*, *Al-Liwā'*, and *Al-Manār*. Their writers accused the Dutch government of oppressing Muslims and called upon Abdulhamid,

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[48] Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 5.

[49] Ibid., pp. 13-21 and 36-72.

[50] Van den Berg listed nine Arabic newspapers, published in Constantinople, Beirut, Cairo, Alexandria, and Paris, which circulated among Hadramis in the Indies, and he added that the list was not complete. Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 174.

[51] On the pan-Islamic importance of *Al-Jawā'ib* see Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam*, pp. 60-2.

[52] Mandal, "Finding their Place," pp. 133-4.

[53] Jan Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism between the Porte, The Hague and Buitenzorg," in *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926: Four Essays on Dutch, Dutch-Indian and Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1992), pp. 85-90; Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam*, pp. 39-44.

as Caliph of the faithful, to defend the Muslims of the Indies against Dutch tyranny.[54]

The writers of these letters were never identified by the Dutch colonial authorities, but it was clear that they originated from men of wealth and some education among the Hadramis. One writer who can now be identified with certainty is Sayyid Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl Bin Yaḥyā, who contributed several articles under the pen-name Sayf al-Dīn al-Yamanī (Yemeni Sword of Religion).[55] A resident of Singapore, Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl was typical of the new Hadrami leadership: he left Hadramawt as a teenager and traveled to Java, where he made his fortune in trade. Having achieved a position of wealth and prominence he turned his attention to education and publishing, establishing a modern school and contributing to the publication of perhaps the region's first Islamic magazine, *Al-Imam*.[56] Although the other writers remain anonymous, their backgrounds were probably similar.

Given that the letters appeared in the pan-Islamic press, their authors might be expected to present the traditional vision of the Hadramis as part of a broad, multi-racial Islamic community. To an extent, this was the case. The Hadrami writers presented themselves as spokesmen for the entire Muslim community of the Indies. Their complaints ranged widely, from mistreatment of Chinese converts to Islam, to restrictions on the operation of Islamic schools and the public recitation of the *Qur'an*, to the Aceh war.[57] The unity of the world's four hundred million Muslims under their Caliph was often noted. One letter from Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl, for example, observed that the Muslims "unite their hearts in love for their sovereign, the great Caliph, the Ottoman Sultan."[58] In this respect the pan-Islamic movement can be viewed as a continuation of the older sense of religious identification.

On a closer reading, however, the letters are more ambiguous. Alongside the sense of Muslim solidarity, there are also signs of a new, distinctly Arab sense of identity. The letters returned time and again, for example, to the theme of Dutch mistreatment of Arabs, with government policies and officials coming under harsh criticism. At times the writers also displayed a paternalistic, and even superior, attitude towards the indigenous Muslims of the Indies. For example Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl observed that "had the Arabs not traveled in these parts [the Indies],

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[54] Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism," pp. 119-31. See also Tom van den Berge, "Nederland, Indie en de Panislamitische Pers (1897-1909)," *Jambatan* 5,1: 15-24; and Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Journal of Asian Studies* 26,2 (February 1967): 280-1. On the letters to *Al-Manār* see Jutta E. Bluhm, "A Preliminary Statement on the Dialogue Established between the Reform Magazine *Al-Manar* and the Malayo-Indonesian World," *Indonesia Circle* 32 (November 1983): 36-8.

[55] On this identification see Mohamed Aboulkhir Zaki, "Modern Muslim Thought in Egypt and its Impact on Islam in Malaya" (PhD dissertation, University of London, 1965), pp. 384-7.

[56] On bin 'Aqīl's life see his obituary, "Al-Faqīd al-'Aẓīm wa'l Rāḥil al-Jalīl al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Marḥūm Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl Bin Yaḥyā," *Ḥaḍramawt*, September 24, 1931, pp. 1-2; Werner Ende, "Schiitische Tendenzen bei sunnitischen Sayyids aus Hadramaut: Muhammad b. 'Aqil al-'Alawi (1863-1931)," *Der Islam* 50 (1973): 87-8; and the sources cited therein.

[57] Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism," pp. 119-24.

[58] Gobee and Adriaanse, *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, p. 1539.

then the people would have remained in their coarse savage state."[59] Another letter asserted that the Javanese "are very ignorant about their religion and there are no schools and competent scholars to enlighten them about their religion and their world."[60] Such attitudes provide support for Mandal's view that the Hadramis who assumed leadership of the pan-Islamic movement in the Indies were thereby asserting their superiority *as a race* over the indigenous population of the Indies. According to Mandal, such paternalism towards native Muslims suggests an Arab *mission civilisatrice* comparable to the mission of the Europeans, and reflecting a similar attitude of racial separateness and superiority.

The origins of this sense of "Arab-ness," distinct from and superior to the indigenous Muslims of the Indies, can be found in the political-legal structure of the colony itself. In his influential work *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson has argued that colonial rulers in Southeast Asia viewed their subject populations through an ethno-racial grid.[61] In other words, colonized peoples were increasingly viewed by their rulers in racial categories rather than, say, religious ones. This generalization applies particularly in the case of the Netherlands East Indies. As Dutch rule came to be applied throughout the Indonesian archipelago, the colonial government imposed a system of law and government which divided the population into three broad racial categories: Europeans, foreign orientals, and natives. Hadramis formed the second largest group within the second category, which they shared with the Chinese (by far the largest group), Indians, and migrants from other Asian countries (except the Japanese, who were classified as Europeans). Foreign orientals formed an intermediate category in the legal system: in some respects they were subject to the same laws as Europeans, while in others they were under the jurisdiction of native law.[62]

During the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century the Hadramis, as foreign orientals, were subject to particular laws which separated them from the indigenous population by restricting their place of residence and their movement within the colony. The quarter system, or *wijkenstelsel*, required foreign orientals to live in the section of each city which had been specified for their group. Early in the nineteenth century the Hadramis were usually allocated to a quarter designated for foreign Muslims. In Batavia, and often elsewhere, this quarter was named Pekojan after the Kojas from India who had formed the majority of the non-indigenous Muslims prior to the nineteenth century. As Hadrami migration escalated they came to form by far the dominant group, but the name Pekojan remained. High rates of Hadrami migration led to severe overcrowding in the quarters, with a resulting lack of cleanliness and hygiene: the Arab quarters were often "the unhealthiest parts of the city."[63]

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[59] Ibid., p. 1537; Sumit K. Mandal, "Natural Leaders of Native Muslims: Arab Ethnicity and Politics in Java under Dutch Rule," in *Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean: 1750s-1960*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997), p. 194.

[60] Letter to *Al-Manār* 2,43 (1900), as cited in ibid., p. 192.

[61] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 164-70.

[62] For a description of the status of foreign orientals see Donald E. Willmott, *The National Status of the Chinese in Indonesia, 1900-1958* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1961), pp. 2-3 and p. 7.

[63] Gobee and Adriaanse, *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, p. 1570.

The unsavory nature of their living quarters was one cause for the resentment expressed by Hadramis in their letters of the 1890s. Even more vexatious was the pass system or *passenstelsel*, by which Hadramis were required to obtain a pass every time they wished to travel outside their city of residence. Given that the majority of Hadramis were itinerant traders, and hence needed to travel constantly in order to carry out their business, this was a particularly onerous duty. The pass bore the name of the holder, his place of departure, destination, and the towns through which he was permitted to travel *en route*. According to Snouck Hurgronje the process of obtaining a pass could take twenty-four hours, even if the traveler only wanted to journey from Batavia to Buitenzorg (Bogor), a distance of less than one hour by train.[64] The process was made even more difficult by local European officials who often bore a personal dislike for the Arabs. [65]

The *wijkenstelsel* and *passenstelsel*, which were not revoked until the second decade of the twentieth century, were tools of a Dutch policy of segregation. This policy heightened a sense of racial difference between the Hadramis and indigenous Muslims. Sumit Mandal has argued persuasively that the institutionalization of racial difference by the Dutch, and in particular the emergence of Arab ghettos created by the *wijkenstelsel*, were of crucial importance in the creation of a new "Arab" consciousness among the Hadrami towards the end of the nineteenth century:

> following the separation of groups by pseudo-racial categories through the pass and quarter system, more self-consciously Arab and Chinese groups had begun to assert themselves within the political legal boundaries that had been set up in the preceding half century . . . as some have argued in the case of the Chinese, in all likelihood this group would have been assimilated into native society had it not been for the statutory separations imposed on them in the second half of the nineteenth century.[66]

That the new Hadrami elite was coming to adopt a distinctly "Arab" racial identity, however, does not imply that their older Islamic loyalties were being abandoned altogether. On the contrary, the emerging sense of Arab-ness was predicated on the view that the Arabs would be the natural leaders of the broader Muslim community of which they formed an elite part.[67] This assumption is encapsulated in Reid's observation that 'Abdurraḥmān al-Zāhir "acknowledged no loyalty to any particular country or people but only to the house of Islam, *of which he was an aristocrat.*"[68] There was no sense of contradiction between Arab-ness and Islamic identity; rather, it was assumed that whatever was in the interests of the Arabs would also be in the interests of the Islamic community as a whole.

The adoption of a dual racial and religious identity was not unusual at this time. C. Earnest Dawn has pointed out that "many, perhaps all, of the early Western-influenced intellectuals of the Ottoman territories and Egypt held

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[64] Ibid., p. 1533

[65] Huub de Jonge, "Dutch Colonial Policy pertaining to Hadhrami Immigrants," in *Hadrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen*, p. 101.

[66] Mandal, "Finding their Place," p. 90.

[67] This discussion is based on the analysis in Mandal, "Natural Leaders," pp. 185-98.

[68] Reid, "Habib Abdur-Rahman Az-Zahir," p. 37. Italics added.

overlapping self-views without any sense of contradiction."[69] If it appears paradoxical that the development of a new racialized sense of identity should have coincided with the rise of pan-Islam, a movement which promoted Muslim unity, it should be noted that this phenomenon was repeated elsewhere in the Islamic world. Nikki Keddie argues that pan-Islam served as a kind of proto-nationalism in many parts of the Middle East, forming "an important step in the transition from Islamic to national loyalties."[70] Many early Egyptian, Iranian, and Arab nationalists were concurrently supporters of pan-Islam, and found no contradiction in professing both forms of identification. Al-Afghānī himself, the most famous pan-Islamist of them all:

> was able to switch back and forth from appeals to a single nation to appeals to the entire Islamic community without feeling any apparent contradiction . . . He never renounced nationalist pronouncements or felt a contradiction between Pan-Islam and local nationalisms.[71]

In the case of the Hadramis in the Indies, the emerging sense of Arab-ness may even have been *dependent upon* their leadership of the broader Islamic community. Mandal describes paternalism towards indigenous Muslims as "*intrinsic* to the making of the notion of 'Arabness'."[72] If this view is correct, then the new understanding of Arab identity was dependent upon continuing acquiescence by Indies Muslims in the view that they shared a common Muslim identity with the Hadramis. The emergence, in the early years of the twentieth century, of an Indonesian nationalism which specifically rejected Hadrami leadership was to challenge the identity of Arabs as the leaders of the indigenous Muslim community. The resulting shift in the basis of Hadrami identification is the subject of the following chapter.

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[69] C. Earnest Dawn, "The Origins of Arab Nationalism," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, ed. Rashid Khalidi et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 7.

[70] Nikki R. Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," *The Journal of Modern History* 41 (March-December 1969): 17-28.

[71] Ibid., pp. 22-4.

[72] Mandal, "Natural Leaders," p. 196. Italics added.

CHAPTER TWO

NAHḌAH: THE HADRAMI AWAKENING

The understanding man yearns for his homeland as a camel yearns for its resting place.[1]

We are Hadramis above all else.[2]

For the Hadrami community in the Indies, the dawn of the twentieth century marked the beginning of what became known as the *nahḍah al-ḥaḍramīyyah*, or Hadrami awakening. The Arabic term *nahḍah* carries connotations of awakening, resurgence, revival, and renaissance. The expression conveyed, therefore, the sense that the Hadramis were embarking on an exciting new phase in their history. The *nahḍah* stood for progress, an entry into the modern world through the adoption of its ideas and institutions. It implied that the Hadramis were striving to be the equals of other people in culture, civilization, and education. Led by the newly emergent elite of the community, the *nahḍah* was embodied in three institutions which mushroomed among the Hadramis after 1900: voluntary associations, modern schools, and newspapers.[3]

The *nahḍah* also signified the "awakening" of the Hadramis to a new sense of identity which may best be described as territorial patriotism. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Hadramis came to view themselves as the people of one land, Hadramawt, and to feel that they owed some kind of allegiance to that land. Hadramawt became known as *al-waṭan al-maḥbūb*, the beloved homeland; and love for the homeland, or *waṭanīyyah*, was regarded as the duty of each of her sons. This new homeland-oriented "Hadrami-ness" provided a new focus for the sense of Arab-ness which had arisen towards the end of the nineteenth century.

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[1] "Wājibāt al-waṭan," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 1.

[2] "Naḥnu Ḥaḍramiyūn qabla kulli shay'," *Al-Bashīr*, April 15, 1915, p. 1.

[3] Given the fragmentary nature of the early sources, it is difficult to determine precisely where and when the term *nahḍah al-ḥaḍramīyyah* first originated. But it became ubiquitous in the 1920s. In the 1930s an Arabic-language newspaper published in Singapore took *Al-Nahḍah Al-Ḥaḍramīyyah* as its title. An account of the *nahḍah* can be found in "Al-Ḥaḍārimah wa nahḍatuhum," *Al-Dahnā'*, February 1928, and subsequent issues.

AWAKENINGS: THE TIONG HOA HWE KOAN AND JAM'ĪYYAH KHAYR

To understand the Hadrami *nahḍah* we must first understand its relationship to the Chinese "awakening" which preceded it. As we have seen, the Chinese formed the largest group within the "foreign oriental" category of the population of the Netherlands East Indies. Their presence in the Indies preceded that of the Hadramis: reports from the fifteenth century already note the presence of substantial settled Chinese communities,[4] whereas large-scale Hadrami migration did not begin until the latter half of the eighteenth century. By 1900 the Chinese population of Java and Madura had reached 277,265, while the comparable Arab population was less than twenty thousand.[5] In terms of their economic role, the Chinese can be classified with the Hadramis as a middleman minority.[6] As foreign orientals, they also suffered from the same residential and traveling restrictions as the Hadramis. In many respects the two groups shared similar interests, and they were natural economic competitors.

The Chinese awakening had its origins in the Confucian revival movement which appeared in Java at the turn of the century. Apparently influenced by the Confucian revival which began in China around 1895 and quickly spread to Singapore and Malaya, a group of young, Dutch mission-educated Chinese formed an association to further the study of Confucianism in Batavia in March 1900. The leaders of the Tiong Hoa Hwe KoanBatavia (the Batavia Chinese Association; THHK) sought to reform the customs of the Indies Chinese in accordance with what they perceived to be the teachings of Confucius. Customs related to marriage and funerals were given particular attention, as they were considered to be riddled with superstitious practices derived from local custom.[7]

Knowledge of Chinese was considered to be the key to a true understanding of Confucian teachings. One of the first actions of the THHK, then, was the establishment of a school which promoted the study of Chinese language. This institution followed the models of new schools in China and Japan and of Dutch mission education. It represented a radical departure, for whereas the traditional schools emphasized learning the Confucian classics by rote, the THHK taught children Chinese characters so that they could read the classics for themselves. The school divided the children into graded classes, with pupils to be promoted upon completion of required courses of study. It utilized western-style textbooks and admitted female as well as male students, a marked departure from previous practice. The school supplemented language teaching with discussions of the teachings of Confucius, as well as English, mathematics, geography, "and other

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[4] Denys Lombard and Claudine Salmon, "Islam and Chineseness," *Indonesia* 57 (April 1994): 115-17.

[5] Charles A. Coppel, "The Origins of Confucianism as an Organized Religion in Java, 1900-1923," *JSEAS* 12,1 (March 1981): 180; and Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Arabs in Indonesia," *The Middle East Journal* 7 (Summer 1953), p. 300.

[6] Charles A. Coppel, "Arab and Chinese Minority Groups in Java," *Southeast Asia Ethnicity and Development Newsletter* 3,2 (May 1979): 9-10.

[7] Coppel, "The Origins of Confucianism," pp. 180-91.

useful subjects."[8] The THHK school in Batavia provided a model for educational reform which was soon copied by Chinese communities throughout the Indies. By the end of 1906 there were over ten thousand students enrolled in these new Chinese schools.[9]

Similar to the Chinese example, the beginning of the Hadrami awakening can be dated to the founding of the first modern organization among the Hadramis. Jam'īyyah Khayr (The Benevolent Society) was founded in Batavia around 1901, and gained recognition as a legal body from the colonial government in July 1905.[10] It bore a striking resemblance to the Chinese THHK. Jam'īyyah Khayr was a modern-style organization with a formal constitution, a governing executive elected at annual general meetings, and registered members. Restricted by its constitution to Batavia, it began with about seventy members.[11] Membership came almost exclusively from Hadramis.[12] The founders of Jam'īyyah Khayr belonged to the newly emergent, modernizing Hadrami elite whose rise we have noted in the previous chapter. Dominant among the early leaders were *sayyids* from the Bin Shahāb and Al-Mashhūr families, but non-*sayyids* were also involved at the highest level. The first chairman of the organization was Shaykh Sa'īd bin Aḥmad Bāṣandīd, while its vice-chairman from 1906 was another non-*sayyid*, Shaykh Sālim bin 'Awaḍ Bālwā'il.[13] 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās and 'Umar Manqūsh, who we met in the previous chapter, both supported Jam'īyyah Khayr.[14]

Both the THHK and Jam'īyyah Khayr operated according to western conventions. Moreover, like the THHK, Jam'īyyah Khayr achieved its greatest success in the field of education. Education was the watchword of the *nahḍah*: modern education, which incorporated knowledge of western sciences and languages as well as more traditional religious subjects, was perceived as essential if the Hadramis were to progress. In the late nineteenth century 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās had sent his four sons to Turkey, Egypt, and Europe in order to attain such an education. A small number of others, including Sayyids 'Alī bin Aḥmad Bin Shahāb and 'Abdulqādir al-'Aydrūs, and the non-*sayyid* families Bājunayd and Bin Sunkar, followed suit. In 1900 there were some seventeen boys from Java, mainly Hadramis,

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[8] Ibid., p. 184; and Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), pp. 66-72.

[9] Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism*, p. 77.

[10] Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), p. 146.

[11] Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 61.

[12] Membership was in fact open to all Muslims, but only a few non-Hadramis joined the organization, and their role appears to have been passive. Non-Hadramis do not appear among the members of the executive of Jam'īyyah Khayr.

[13] Leading figures from the Bin Shahāb family included Sayyids Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh, 'Aydrūs bin Aḥmad, and Muḥammad bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bin Shahāb. From the Al-Mashhūr family were Muḥammad Al-Fakhīr bin 'Abdurraḥmān and 'Aydrūs bin 'Abdullāh Al-Mashhūr. The 1905 and 1906 executives are listed in Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," pp. 146-8.

[14] "Al-Sayyid al-Marḥūm 'Abdullāh bin 'Alwī al-'Aṭṭās," *Ḥaḍramawt*, June 29, 1929; and *Oetoesan Melajoe* 50 [May 1916?], as cited in "Persoverzicht," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* 5,1 (1916): 794.

studying in Istanbul.[15] But this solution was only available to a wealthy few. What was really needed was the provision of modern-style education in the Indies. To this end, Jam'īyyah Khayr opened the first modern school for Hadramis in Pekojan, Batavia in 1906.[16] This school was followed by schools in Krukut, Tanah Abang, and Buitenzorg.

Whereas traditional Islamic schools were characterized by exclusively Islamic curricula and a teaching style based on rote-learning of the *Qur'an* and other Islamic texts, the Jam'īyyah Khayr schools introduced a modern structure and curriculum.[17] The students were divided into graded classes, sat at desks, and used modern textbooks with illustrations (taboo in traditional Islamic schools). They studied arithmetic, geography, Islamic history, and English language, along with Arabic and more traditional Islamic subjects. The underlying philosophy of the schools emphasized the importance of understanding, Arabic language being viewed as the means by which students would be able to read and comprehend the Scriptures for themselves.[18] Apart from formal classes, informal discussions or *majlis* were conducted in which problems of the reform of Islam were discussed, based on articles from the Middle Eastern press including the Egyptian publication *Al-Manār*.[19]

Following the establishment of Jam'īyyah Khayr and the success of its first school, similar organizations soon appeared in other cities. By 1911 modern schools had been opened by Shamā'il al-Huda (Nature of True Guidance) in Pekalongan,[20] the Jam'īyyah al-'Arabīyyah al-Islāmīyyah (Arab Islamic Association) in Solo,[21] and the Jam'īyyah al-Khayrīyyah (Benevolent Society) in Surabaya.[22] A modern school was also operating in Palembang under Hadrami auspices: it was known as the Madrasah al-'Arabīyyah (Arab School). These mushrooming schools and organizations attest to the spread of the ideals of the Hadrami *nahḍah*.

There were clear similarities between THHK schools and those of Jam'īyyah Khayr. In both cases, the schools were characterized by a modern, western curriculum and educational philosophy. Students were divided into graded classes and studied both religious and secular subjects. Traditional rote-learning was rejected in favor of a pedagogic approach which emphasized "reason" and encouraged students to participate in informal discussion groups.

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[15] Jan Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism between the Porte, The Hague and Buitenzorg," in *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926: Four Essays on Dutch, Dutch-Indian and Ottoman History* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1992), pp. 91-102.

[16] "Tatimmah li-tarjamah al-marḥūm ra'īs al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah al-sayyid al-sharīf Muḥammad bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bin Shahāb al-Dīn al-'Alawī al-Ḥussayni," *Ḥaḍramawt*, October 16, 1930, p. 1.

[17] The differences between traditional and modern Islamic schools are discussed in detail in chapter four.

[18] Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement*, pp. 59-61.

[19] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," p. 151.

[20] Address by Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, July 21, 1931.

[21] Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement*, p. 60.

[22] "Tatimmah li-tarjamah al-marḥūm ra'īs al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah al-sayyid al-sharīf Muḥammad bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bin Shahāb al-Dīn al-'Alawī al-Ḥussayni," *Ḥaḍramawt*, October 16, 1930, p.1.

In comparing the THHK and Jam'īyyah Khayr, we need to consider whether the similarities were due to direct influence by the former organization on the latter, or both organizations arose independently but happened to offer their respective communities similar responses to similar problems. In the absence of primary sources from the period, a definitive answer to this question is impossible. Later evidence, however, suggests that the founders of Jam'īyyah Khayr were aware of the THHK and probably used it as a model. First, it is clear from the Arabic press of the 1920s that the Hadramis were keenly aware of developments in the Chinese community, and frequently used the Chinese as a yardstick to measure their own level of progress.[23] There is no reason to assume that the same was not the case at the beginning of the century. Secondly, a former Jam'īyyah Khayr teacher, the Tunisian Muḥammad al-Hāshimī, attested to the importance of the Chinese example for the Hadramis in an interview published in an Egyptian newspaper in 1929.[24] Thirdly, it is significant that in 1914, when members of Jam'īyyah Khayr broke away to form the rival organization al-Irshad, they based the constitution of the new organization on that of the THHK.[25] On the basis of this evidence, it seems reasonable to assume that the founders of Jam'īyyah Khayr would have been well aware of the THHK and probably used it as a model for their organization.

CHINESE-NESS AND ARAB-NESS

A crucial aspect of the Chinese awakening was the articulation of a vision of the Chinese as a distinct group with their own language, customs, and religious tradition. This vision of Chinese-ness may be viewed as the Chinese parallel to the growth of Arab-ness among the Hadramis in the late nineteenth century. It can similarly be traced to the imposition of racial categories by the colonial government, which fostered the creation of Chinese ghettoes just as it did Arab ones.[26] The constitution of the THHK reflected this vision of Chinese-ness when it declared that:

> The aim of this organization is to establish and maintain a fund to be used as necessary in order to:
> (a) promote the customs of *the Chinese people* as far as possible in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Confucius and without impropriety, and to promote knowledge of languages and literacy among *the Chinese people*.[27]

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[23] For a typical example see "Ḥājatunā ilā al-iṣlāḥ al-kullī," *Al-Irshād*, February 24, 1921, p. 2. The article argues that the Hadramis should follow the example of the Chinese in establishing a college.

[24] "Al-Ustādh al-Hāshimī al-Tūnisī yataḥaddath 'an Jāwah wa sukkānihā," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-September 1929, p. 44.

[25] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah: Al-Asāsī wa'l-Dākhilī* (Batavia: 1919), pp. 12-13. This publication contains Arabic, Dutch, and Malay sections. The Arabic section is cited here. Cf. Nio Joe Lan, *Riwajat 40 Taon dari Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan - Batavia (1900-1939)* (Batavia: Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan, 1940), p. 7. This point is discussed further below.

[26] Lombard and Salmon, "Islam and Chineseness," p. 128.

[27] Nio Joe Lan, *Riwajat 40 Taon*, p. 7. Italics added.

THHK schools fostered a process of "re-sinicization" among the Indies Chinese by promoting the study of Chinese language and customs. The THHK was quickly joined by other, more explicitly nationalist organizations which were inspired by the same ideal of a united and "awakened" Chinese community, distinct from the Dutch and the indigenous Indonesians.[28] By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Chinese nationalism was firmly rooted in the Indies. Its prevalence is illustrated by the efflorescence of republican symbols which decorated the Chinese quarters of major cities in the Indies upon the success of the 1911 republican revolution in China.[29]

Given the influence which the THHK appears to have exerted on the Hadrami *nahḍah*, can we assume that its articulation of Chinese-ness inspired a corresponding rise in Arab-ness? There is no doubt that Arab-ness received expression in Jam'īyyah Khayr and the organizations which followed it. This is evident from their names alone: the *Arab* Islamic Association in Solo, the *Arab* school in Palembang. The same sense of Arab-ness is reflected in the constitution of Jam'īyyah Khayr, which defined the aim of the association as:

> to provide assistance for *Arab* men and women who live in Batavia and surrounds, upon death [of their family members] or the holding of wedding celebrations. This assistance may be in the form of money or the contribution of items such as clothing, shrouds, and so on.[30]

Of itself, this is not sufficient to prove that the THHK's Chinese-ness actually influenced the Arab focus of the Hadrami organizations. Arab-ness was a vision of the Hadramis which had already emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century, before the THHK was founded. Yet there is another piece of evidence which suggests that the Hadramis, as they watched the Chinese in the THHK, did become aware of themselves as Arabs *in the same sense that the Chinese were Chinese*. This evidence is found in the constitution of al-Irshad, the organization formed out of a split in Jam'īyyah Khayr in 1914.[31] The constitution of THHK, it will be recalled, described its aim as to:

> (a) promote the customs of the Chinese people as far as possible in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Confucius and without impropriety, and to promote knowledge of languages and literacy among the Chinese people.[32]

When the founders of al-Irshad were defining the aim of their own organization, they simply rewrote this clause, in effect removing the word "Chinese" and inserting "Arab" in its place. According to the al-Irshad constitution, then:

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[28] Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism*, pp. 95-111; and Coppel, "The Origins of Confucianism," p. 184.

[29] Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism*, pp. 24-36.

[30] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," pp. 188-9. Italics added.

[31] The origins of al-Irshad will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

[32] Nio Joe Lan, *Riwajat 40 Taon*, p. 7. Italics added.

> The aim of this association is to collect and maintain funds and spend them as follows:
> (a) to spread *Arab customs* which are consistent with the Islamic religion, teach *the Arab community* reading and writing, and promote the Arabic language, Dutch and other necessary languages.[33]

This example reveals, with rare clarity, the manner in which the Hadramis saw themselves in the image of the Indies Chinese community. It is a sign of what Paul Dresch, the historian of Yemen, has described as "the effect of endless mirror reflections that is common to national identities everywhere."[34] The Hadramis were asserting their Arab-ness as a direct equivalent to the Chinese-ness of the THHK.

The crucial difference between the Indies Chinese and the Hadramis was that the Chinese lacked, for the most part, the complicating factor of a shared religious identity with the indigenous population. Although conversion to Islam had often enabled rapid integration by Chinese in earlier centuries, Chinese converts to Islam were relatively rare by the twentieth century.[35] In the case of the Hadramis, the ambiguity of a dual identity—at once "Arab," which implied separateness, and "Muslim," which implied unity with the indigenous population—continued for some years. It can be seen in Jam'īyyah Khayr which, although its constitutional aims were limited to the Arab community, accepted all Muslims as members. The Jam'īyyah Khayr schools were open to Muslim children of all racial backgrounds, and some indigenous children attended. Here again we see the special significance of Islam as a unifying factor. Devout Indonesian Muslims were keen to send their children to a school where they would learn Arabic, for this was the language of Islam, whereas there was no incentive to send them to a THHK school to learn Chinese, a "foreign" language.

The overlap between Arab and Muslim identity can be seen most clearly of all in what seems to have been the first Hadrami periodical published in the Indies. *Al-Bashīr* (The Herald) began publication in Palembang early in 1914. Its editor, Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim, was a leading spirit of the *nahḍah*. In addition to his journalistic activities he taught at the Arab school in Palembang, where he pioneered the use of the Berlitz method for teaching Arabic.[36] Late in 1914 he was appointed to the Jam'īyyah Khayr school in Pekojan, Batavia. As a result his newspaper also shifted to the capital city.[37]

The dual nature of Hadrami identity is illustrated by the fact that *Al-Bashīr* was published in two languages, Arabic and Malay. According to the Arabic

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[33] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn*, pp. 12-13. Italics added.

[34] Paul Dresch, *Tribes, Government, and History in Yemen* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 237.

[35] Despite the contrary examples provided in Lombard and Salmon, "Islam and Chineseness," this generalization appears sound.

[36] Jutta E. Bluhm, "A Preliminary Statement on the Dialogue Established between the Reform Magazine *Al-Manar* and the Malayo-Indonesian World," *Indonesia Circle* 32 (November 1983): 37-8; and R. B. Serjeant, "Historians and Historiography of Hadramawt," reprinted in his *Studies in Arabian History and Civilisation* (London: Valiorum Reprints, 1981), p. 255.

[37] "Al-Bashīr min Batāwī," *Al-Bashīr*, December 18, 1914, p. 3.

masthead the paper was intended to serve the Arabs, Arabic language and the Islamic community. The recognition of Arab-ness which this masthead implies was not, however, present in the Malay masthead, which described the paper as the "Organ of the Muslims and Other Peoples," without making any specific reference to the Arabs.[38] The same equivocation about identity—Arab or Muslim?—is evident in the contents of the newspaper. Whereas the Arabic section focused on issues of specific concern to the Hadramis, such as the progress of the educational reform movement, the Malay-language section addressed a general Islamic audience. Malay articles called for the "progress of our people," with "people" referring to the Muslims generally.[39] There were also signs of pan-Islamic tendencies. Sympathy was expressed, for example, for the establishment in Surabaya of a branch of the Red Crescent Society, a pan-Islamic enterprise which raised funds for the Ottoman war effort.[40] The editor exhorted all Muslims to support the cause of "the Caliph of Islam, the Ottoman Sultanate" in a manner which suggested strong pan-Islamic, rather than racial, identification.[41]

Equivocation between Arab and Islamic identity was not simply a matter of giving a different message to different linguistic audiences, although this consideration probably played a part. To ask which was the true identity, as if one were sincere and the other feigned, misses the point. For Muḥammad bin Hāshim there was not necessarily a conflict between identifying as an Arab and as a Muslim. In this he was not unusual. As we saw in the previous chapter, a dual sense of identity characterized many Arab Muslim intellectuals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nevertheless, Muḥammad bin Hāshim would be one of the last Hadramis in the Indies who could express a dual identity with such ease. As we shall see in the following section, the development of the Indonesian nationalist movement during the war years meant that the cosmopolitan Muslim community of which they had been an integral part was rapidly transformed into an Indonesian-national community where the place of the Hadramis was, at best, marginal. As the Indonesians turned towards nationalism and away from Islamic modes of identification, Hadramis were left with little choice but to embrace a more exclusive kind of identity.

THE RISE OF INDONESIAN NATIONALISM

The Indonesian awakening, like the Chinese and Hadrami cases, was characterized by the formation of modern-style organizations, the publication of newspapers, and educational reform.[42] Unlike the Hadrami and Chinese examples,

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[38] *Al-Bashīr*, December 18, 1914.

[39] "Pemberi Tahoewan," *Al-Bashīr*, December 18, 1914, p. 2.

[40] *Al-Bashīr*, January 29, 1915, p. 7. On the pan-Islamic function of the Red Crescent see Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 55-6.

[41] Bin Hāshim was cautioned by Dutch authorities for publishing reports of the society, which were considered to violate Dutch neutrality in the war. *Al-Bashīr*, April 15, 1915, p. 2. It was presumably on the basis of such articles that a Dutch official classified the paper as pan-Islamic rather than nationalist in spirit. S. L. van der Wal, ed., *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indie* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1967), pp. 384-5.

[42] M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300* (London: Macmillan, 1993), pp. 163-80.

however, there was no immediate ethnic, linguistic, or religious factor which united all of what is known today as the Indonesian nation. The process by which the Javanese, Balinese, Minangkabau, and other indigenous peoples of the Indies became "Indonesian" took its course over several decades and cannot be analyzed here. What is important to note, however, is that the earliest years of the Indonesian awakening were marked by a proliferation of organizations founded on various bases including ethnicity, class, ideology, and religion. Hadramis were naturally excluded from many of these organizations. Among those organizations which appealed to the Islamic community, however, Hadramis could—and for some years, did—play an active role. The process by which they were, by 1918, marginalized from the same organizations illustrates the shifting nature of Indonesian identity in this period, as well as providing a background to changes in Hadrami perceptions of themselves.

Hadramis played a significant role in the early Indonesian nationalist movement, to which they contributed capital and some leadership. The first thing that the Hadramis provided was an example of organization. Just as the Hadramis had looked to the model of the THHK in establishing Jam'īyyah Khayr, indigenous Indonesians watched the progress of both of these bodies with interest. A handful of Javanese took the step of joining Jam'īyyah Khayr.[43] Many more, however, read of their activities in the flourishing Malay language press. The Indonesian novelist and historian Pramoedya Ananta Toer, in his fictionalized account of the Indonesian awakening, conveys the symbolic and practical significance of these two organizations for Minke, the main protagonist of his famous tetralogy:

> [the Chinese] organized themselves here in the Indies so that they could begin the process of awakening their own people—through education. Their first organization was the Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan . . . The Arabs established their first organization in 1902. Now a more advanced one was being established, the Jamiatul Khair . . . Both the Chinese and Arab organizations were working to bring their people into the modern era . . . If we Natives began organising now we would be starting from behind. The score at the moment is Chinese 4 - Natives 0; Chinese 4 - Arabs 2, and Arabs 2 - Natives 0. That's how many years we are behind. [44]

It was cooperation between Hadrami and Javanese traders which laid the basis for one of the earliest Islamic organizations in the Indies, a body which has ironically come to be viewed as a forerunner of the Indonesian nationalist movement. The *Sarekat Dagang Islamiah* (Islamic Commercial Union; SDI) was established in Buitenzorg in March 1909. The conventional account of its origins usually credits the Javanese journalist Tirtoadisurjo (now immortalized by Pramoedya as Sang Pemula, the Pioneer of the Indonesian awakening, and the real-life figure on whom the character of Minke was based) with the foundation of

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[43] Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement*, p. 58. Haji Agus Salim apparently believed that many members of Boedi Oetomo were also members of Jam'īyyah Khayr, but there is little evidence for this. Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1960), p. 266.

[44] Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Footsteps* (Melbourne: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 92-3.

SDI.[45] In fact its establishment was a joint endeavor between Javanese and Hadrami traders. The organization's Javanese-Hadrami origins are mirrored in the composition of its first executive, which consisted of five Hadramis and four Javanese. The aims of SDI reflected the urban Muslim community in which it was established. It was open to all Muslims living in the Indies, and aimed to support Muslim traders who were competing with Chinese and European entrepreneurs.[46]

The Hadramis on the SDI executive were Aḥmad bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bājunayd (president), Sa'īd bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bājunayd (treasurer), Aḥmad bin Sa'īd Bājunayd, Muḥammad bin Sa'īd Bājunayd, and Ghālib bin Sa'īd Bin Tabī'.[47] They were all non-*sayyids* and wealthy traders, typical of the leaders of the Hadrami *nahḍah*. Several were also active in the Hadrami educational organizations. The Bājunayd brothers, Aḥmad and Sa'īd, had been among the first Hadramis sent to Istanbul for a modern education in 1899. Their education was funded by their father, Shaykh 'Abdurraḥmān bin 'Abdullāh Bājunayd, who was the Arab quartermaster in Buitenzorg in the closing years of the nineteenth century.[48] Ghālib Bin Tabī' was the Arab *luitenant* in Buitenzorg until 1914, the head of Jam'īyyah Khayr in that city, and an active figure in the educational organization al-Irshad from 1915 until his death in 1921.[49] Aḥmad bin Sa'īd Bājunayd was also on the executive of al-Irshad in its early years, and was appointed as Arab *luitenant* in Buitenzorg in 1921.[50]

By the end of 1909 the SDI was on the verge of collapse. The colonial government had refused to grant it legal status on the grounds that Arabs were subject to different commercial and bankruptcy laws from natives, and therefore a commercial organization including both groups could not be recognized by law.[51] At the same time differences seem to have arisen between the Bājunayd family and Tirtoadisurjo. Around the time of the founding of SDI, Aḥmad and Sa'īd bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bājunayd had sought to be recognized legally as the equals of Europeans, on the grounds of their advanced education. Their request was denied by

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[45] Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Sang Pemula* (Jakarta: Hasta Mitra, 1985), pp. 107-9; and Takashi Shiraishi, "Reading Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Sang Pemula* [The Pioneer]," *Indonesia* 44 (October 1987): 133.

[46] Toer, *Sang Pemula*, pp. 120-2; and van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 91. Economic competition had become more acute since the closure of opium farms, which released considerable amounts of Chinese capital for other industries. See Sumit Mandal, "Finding their Place: A History of Arabs in Java under Dutch Rule, 1800-1924" (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1994), p. 132.

[47] The Javanese members, apart from Tirtoadisurjo himself, were Mohamad Dagrim (a physician), Mas Railoes (a landowner), and Hadji Mohamad Arsad. Toer, *Sang Pemula*, p. 122. Apart from their role on the executive, the Hadramis also provided capital to help establish the organization. Aḥmad bin 'Abdurraḥmān and Aḥmad bin Sa'īd Bājunayd were the largest contributors, each donating five hundred guilders. Ahmat B. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1995), p. 117.

[48] Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism," pp. 98-101.

[49] *Al-Irshād*, April 28, 1921, p. 2; and Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," p. 455.

[50] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, Arabic ms., pp. 11 and 19. I am grateful to Hussein Badjerei for providing me with a photocopy of this manuscript, and to Naim Bedros for transcribing it. I have been unable to discover any information about the final member, Muḥammad Bājunayd, who was presumably the brother of Aḥmad bin Sa'īd.

[51] Adam, *The Vernacular Press*, p. 117.

the colonial authorities. Both men appear to have returned to Istanbul in May 1909, disillusioned by the failure of their attempts to attain European status and determined to seek Ottoman citizenship instead.[52] Both president and treasurer of the new organization thereby removed themselves from the scene only a few months after its establishment. According to Rinkes, the government adviser for native affairs, their withdrawal from the association was due to a falling-out with Tirtoadisurjo: "the moneylenders . . . had seen through the man and no longer wanted to pay up."[53] Pramoedya, on the other hand, has suggested that the real reason for their change of heart was nervousness that the colonial authorities would perceive the organization as pan-Islamic and pro-Turkish.[54] It should be pointed out the Bājunayd brothers had a long history of challenging the colonial hierarchy. On visits to the Indies in 1904-5 and 1907 they had caused consternation within Dutch government circles by refusing to give up their Turkish-style clothing in favor of the Arab dress which they were legally required to wear, and otherwise rebelling against their low status in the colony.[55] This being the case, Pramoedya's explanation seems unlikely and that of Rinkes is probably closer to the truth.

By early 1910, Tirtoadisurjo had dissolved the SDI and had auctioned off its assets. He soon established another organization with the same name and a similar constitution, but restricted to indigenous members.[56] The second SDI fared little better than the first. Its progress was hampered by Tirtoadisurjo's loss of Hadrami financial support, as well as his being exiled to the outer islands for breaching press laws. The significance of the SDI for our purposes lies in that fact that Hadramis were prepared (personal differences aside) to cooperate with indigenous Muslims in the interests of commerce and the "awakening" of the Muslim community.

The same is true of the successor to the SDI, the Surakarta-based Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union), in its early years. Sarekat Islam, the first Indonesian mass organization, had its origins in an association for mutual help known as Rekso Roemekso (The Guard), which was established by *batik* traders in Surakarta around 1911. The association, whose members had become involved in street fighting with Chinese traders, soon felt the need to be protected by legal recognition as an incorporated body. Early in 1912 Tirtoadisurjo was invited by the founders of the organization to compose the application for incorporation, and he drew up statutes by which the association was recognized as a branch of his own SDI. Rekso Roemekso was thus renamed as SDI Surakarta, but the "Dagang" of the title was soon dropped, leaving it with the name Sarekat Islam.[57] In practice, however, Sarekat Islam remained independent of the now-defunct SDI.

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[52] Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism," p. 100.

[53] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 91.

[54] Toer, *Sang Pemula*, pp. 124-5.

[55] Schmidt, "Pan-Islamism," pp. 98-101. See also *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936*, ed. E. Gobee and C. Adriaanse (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), vol. 2, pp. 1587-92.

[56] Adam, *The Vernacular Press*, pp. 117-8.

[57] Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 39-43. Compare the account of the organization's origins found in A. P. E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916: Opkomst, Bloei en Structuur van Indonesie's Eerste Massabeweging* (Amsterdam: Historische Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982), chapter two.

Sarekat Islam was established in Surakarta, a city with a very small Hadrami population, so it is no surprise that it initially enjoyed little Hadrami patronage. As the organization began to spread to the coastal cities of Java, however, it attracted Hadrami membership. Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Ḥusayn al-'Aydrūs, for example, was a member of the Sarekat Islam branch executive in Batavia. Simultaneously the chairman of Jam'īyyah Khayr, he advocated the now-familiar ideals of "education and progress" at Sarekat Islam meetings in Batavia.[58] The executive of the Sarekat Islam sub-branch in Buitenzorg, established in April 1913, included Shaykh Sa'īd Bājunayd, the former treasurer of the SDI who had now returned from Istanbul, as "adviser for the Arabs."[59] In Tangerang the Sarekat Islam sub-branch included on its first executive Sayyid 'Uthmān al-Saqqāf as patron (*beschermheer*) and Sayyid 'Abdurraḥman al-Shāṭirī as a commissioner.[60] The Sarekat Islam branch in Lasem was dominated by Sayyid Abūbakr bin 'Alī al-Saqqāf.[61]

The most influential Hadrami to be involved with Sarekat Islam, however, was Sayyid Ḥasan Bin Sumayt, a resident of Surabaya who was a member of its central executive between 1914 and 1919. Apart from his administrative role, Ḥasan Bin Sumayt was a major financial supporter of Sarekat Islam who is reported to have rescued its leader, Tjokroaminoto, from financial difficulties on several occasions.[62] Like his counterpart al-'Aydrūs in Batavia, he was a keen advocate of modern education and a true man of the *nahḍah*.[63] At the same time as his involvement with Sarekat Islam, he was one of the main forces behind Jam'īyyah al-Khayrīyyah, the Hadrami educational organization in Surabaya.[64]

Although Sarekat Islam began its life as a union of *Muslim* traders, there was growing feeling among indigenous members that the organization should be restricted to natives only. This sentiment was already evident at the first Sarekat Islam congress, held in March 1913, which passed a resolution that henceforth non-natives would only be accepted as members if they had "amply demonstrated their interest and goodwill."[65] Furthermore, the executive committee was to contain not more than one person who did not belong to the native population.[66] These resolutions were clearly aimed at the Hadramis. According to Ahmat B. Adam, who based his observation on contemporary newspaper reports, limitations on membership of the executive committee were put forward by Soewardi Soerjaningrat (later known as Ki Hadjar Dewantoro) on nationalistic grounds; he argued that Sarekat Islam must be a "full-fledged native association."[67] On the other hand, it seems possible that there was also some Dutch pressure on the

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[58] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 200. The activities of Jam'īyyah Khayr attracted considerable attention in Sarekat Islam circles.

[59] *Sarekat Islam Lokal* (Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 1975), pp. 8 and 27-9.

[60] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[61] Ibid., pp. 239-60.

[62] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 496.

[63] Ibid., p. 400.

[64] "Wafāh sayyid fāḍil," *Ḥaḍramaut*, August 22, 1929.

[65] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 179.

[66] Adam, *The Vernacular Press*, p. 169; and Korver, *Sarekat Islam*, pp. 173 and 219.

[67] Adam, *The Vernacular Press*, p. 169.

organization to take this path. The experience of SDI makes it clear that the colonial authorities, still nervous about the potential pan-Islamic influence of the Hadramis, would have looked unfavorably upon a Sarekat Islam with significant Hadrami involvement.

Despite these resolutions, Hadrami involvement in the organization continued for a few more years. A Dutch official who attended the July 1915 Sarekat Islam congress even warned of increasing Arab influence on the association.[68] By 1919, however, a general withdrawal of Hadramis had taken place. There were personal and political reasons for this. On the one hand there were disagreements with Tjokroaminoto, often due to his suspected mishandling of Sarekat Islam funds. On the other hand, many Hadramis were uncomfortable with Sarekat Islam's political shift to the left. Increasingly hostile attacks on "sinful capitalism" and "capitalists" understandably led some wealthy Hadrami traders to feel that they no longer had a place in the organization.[69] More generally though, as Sarekat Islam came to sacrifice its broad Islamic identity for a nationalistic one, the Hadramis felt increasingly marginalized in the organization. Haji Agus Salim, then a Sarekat Islam leader of rising stature, perceived this shift clearly in August 1918:

> Many Arabs have supported the SI in the hope that the organization would work in a pan-Islamic direction. They saw this hope go up in smoke at the last congress of the Central Sarekat Islam; the organization demonstrated a decided Indies-nationalist [direction], by which . . . under no circumstances would much scope be given to the religious element. As a result of which interest from the Arab side is abating.[70]

Early in 1918, Tjokroaminoto attempted to stem the exodus of Hadramis from the organization by establishing a committee which would renew the Islamic appeal of Sarekat Islam. The Tentara Kandjeng Nabi Mohammad (Army of the Lord Prophet Muḥammad; TKNM) was ostensibly formed to mobilize pious Muslims against an article published in the newspaper *Djawi Hiswara* in January 1918, which was considered to have slandered Muḥammad by alleging that he drank gin and smoked opium.[71] The committee had three stated aims: to promote Islam in the Indies, to promote unity among Muslims, and to protect and defend the honor of Islam, the Prophet Muḥammad and Muslims.[72] It is clear from Tjokroaminoto's own admission, however, that the underlying aim was to maintain the support of wealthy Hadramis for Sarekat Islam.[73]

In its initial stages, the TKNM attracted a high level of Hadrami involvement. Out of nineteen initial members there were eight Arabs, seven of

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[68] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 400.

[69] Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, p. 104; and *De Ontwikkeling van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlandsch-Indie*, ed. R. C. Kwantes (Groningen: H. D. Tjeenk Willink, 1975), vol. 1, p. 110.

[70] Van der Wal, *De Opkomst*, p. 400.

[71] Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, p. 106; "Membela haknja Agama Islam," *Neratja*, February 13, 1918; and Schrieke to Governor-General, February 14, 1918, mr. 70x/18, found in vb. August 1, 1918, no. 53, MK, ARA.

[72] "Vergadering Comite 'Tentara Kangdjeng Nabi Mohammad'," *Neratja*, May 14, 1918.

[73] Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, p. 106.

them Hadramis. The various Hadrami educational organizations also pledged their support.[74] Significantly, this high level of Hadrami involvement prompted a hostile response from some Javanese. The Committee for Javanese Nationalism protested against the TKNM in a letter published in the February 23 edition of *Neratja*, a SI newspaper produced in Surabaya.[75] Although the committee agreed that the *Djawi Hiswara* article was worthy of condemnation, nevertheless it regretted the formation of the TKNM. It feared that the organization would act against Javanese who were not strong Muslims, "especially since the movement mainly originates from foreigners—Arabs." The letter was followed by a rejoinder from the editor, in which he declared that the TKNM did not originate from Arabs, but from leaders of Sarekat Islam. Both the letter and the rejoinder reflect a new atmosphere of hostility towards Arabs. Clearly even the editor of *Neratja* felt the need to defend the TKNM from the accusation that it was led by Arabs, as if the accusation, if true, would compromise the movement.

By October, in any case, the TKNM was moribund. In part this reflected the fact that outrage over the original article had subsided. But a general withdrawal of Hadrami support was also to blame. This withdrawal was sparked by Tjokroaminoto's refusal to register the TKNM as a legal corporation as Hadrami donors had demanded. This action confirmed their lack of faith in his trustworthiness, and all Hadramis subsequently resigned from the TKNM committee.[76] This marked the effective end of Hadrami involvement in Sarekat Islam. The *afdeeling-B* scandal, which broke in July 1919 when a subversive "B-branch" of Sarekat Islam was discovered by Dutch authorities, scared away the remaining Hadrami stalwarts.[77]

One of the last to abandon Sarekat Islam, perhaps because he had invested the most in the organization, was Sayyid Ḥasan Bin Sumayt. The reasons for his departure are revealing. According to the Dutch scholar-official Schrieke, the immediate cause of Ḥasan Bin Sumayt's resignation from the Sarekat Islam executive in 1919 was his aversion to the financial mismanagement of its leaders. In particular, he objected to what he perceived as the misuse of funds which had been raised to assist victims of the eruption of Mount Kelut.[78] More fundamentally, however, he was wounded to hear continually from his colleagues on the executive

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[74] The Arab members were Sayyid Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ al-Shāwashī (vice-chairman; Tunisian), Shaykh Rubay'a bin Ambārak Bin Ṭālib (treasurer), Sayyid 'Alawī bin Zayn al-Jufrī, Sayyid Ḥasan bin 'Abdurraḥmān Bin Sumayt, Sayyid Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Musāwā, and Shaykh 'Uthman bin Muḥammad al-'Amudī (commissioners), and Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar al-Bār and Sayyid Saqqāf bin 'Alawī al-Saqqāf (advisers). "Vergadering S.I. bersama-sama," *Neratja*, March 2, 1918; and Schrieke to Governor-General, February 21, 1918, mr. 70x/18, found in vb. August 1, 1918, no. 53, MK, ARA.

[75] "Tentara Nabi Mohamad," *Neratja*, February 23, 1918.

[76] Note by Schrieke dated August 22, 1919 and attached to Hazeu to Governor-General, August 20, 1919, mr. 625x/19, MK, ARA. A TKNM congress hastily held in October attracted only about two hundred people, whereas the meetings held in February had drawn audiences of thousands. The reporter for *Neratja* noted that participants included very few Arabs, while two speakers criticized wealthy Arabs for no longer supporting the movement. "Congres Tentara K. N. Moehamad," *Neratja*, October 9, 1918.

[77] Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, pp. 113-14. On *afdeeling-B* see William A. Oates, "The Afdeeling B: An Indonesian Case Study," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 9,1 (March 1968): 107-16.

[78] Kwantes, *De Ontwikkeling*, vol. 1, p. 224.

that he was not qualified to discuss questions concerning the national interest, on the grounds that he belonged to a "foreign race."[79] Ḥasan Bin Sumayt was born in the Indies of mixed parentage. The fact that he was rejected as a foreigner by the indigenous leaders of Sarekat Islam reveals the extent to which, by 1919, that organization had adopted a nationalistic rather than Islamic identity. It represents a profound shift in indigenous patterns of identification during the decade since the establishment of the Javanese-Hadrami SDI.

In colonial Malaya, according to Tan Liok Ee, the boundaries of a specifically "Malay" community were demarcated during the 1920s and 1930s through the rejection of the claims made by Hadrami Arabs to speak for the entire Muslim community.[80] In other words, early Malay nationalism gained impetus from the desire of Malays to distinguish between themselves and non-Malay Muslims, specifically Arabs. The gradual exclusion of Hadramis from Sarekat Islam between 1912 and 1919 provides evidence that a similar process occurred in the Indies. The definition of the Indonesian "nation" was made sharper through the rejection of a group which found itself "on the border" of that nation, the Hadramis.

WATANĪYYAH

Against this background of growing hostility among Indonesian nationalists, we can now see the rise of Hadrami patriotism in a better perspective. The view that the Hadramis came from one homeland (*waṭan*), and owed their primary allegiance to that homeland (*waṭanīyyah*), was first articulated in *Al-Bashīr*. During 1915 several articles called on the Hadramis to work for the benefit of their homeland. One article, contributed by a writer who called himself *Ḥaḍramī quḥḥ* (Pure Hadrami), had the telling headline "Naḥnu Ḥaḍramiyūn qabla kulli shay'" (We are Hadramis above all else). The writer extolled the virtues of *waṭanīyyah*:

> Patriotism [*waṭanīyyah*] is not a gift given out on trays, it is not a commodity sold in markets, but it is a noble sentiment, a pure feeling which leads a man to yearn for the homeland of his forefathers, the birthplace of his ancestors, and to sacrifice all he has for the sake of improving his nation and its sons.
>
> Patriotism is a great institution, a strong bond that can't be dissolved or shaken by outsiders. The people of one homeland are united in adversity, they comfort each other in time of need, they aim at one goal, they share one spirit, they are united in one path . . .

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[79] Note by Schrieke dated August 22, 1919 and attached to Hazeu to Governor-General, August 20, 1919, mr. 625x/19, MK, ARA.

[80] Tan Liok Ee, *The Rhetoric of Bangsa and Minzu: Community and Nation in Tension, The Malay Peninsula, 1900-1955* (Clayton: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 6-7.

> [We] love our people and our homeland from the bottom of our hearts . . . We don't want . . . to give our children to someone who teaches them how to hate Hadramawt and the Hadramis.[81]

This article reflects a subtle shift from both Arab and Islamic modes of identification to a distinctly Hadrami one. It reveals a new kind of identity which was based on attachment to the land of Hadramawt.

In 1915, "Pure Hadrami" probably represented a minority among his countrymen. Over the next few years, however, the views he expressed rapidly gained support, a shift illustrated by the appearance in Surabaya in mid-1917 of the first Arabic-only newspaper published in the Indies. Compared to its predecessor *Al-Bashīr*, which had by now ceased publication, *Al-Iqbāl* (The Advent) reflected a narrower vision of the place of the Hadramis in the Indies. It was as if one half of *Al-Bashīr* had detached itself from the other. Gone were the pan-Islamic articles and the calls for the progress of the Muslim community; what remained were articles which focused on the educational reform movement among the Ḥadramis, and called on them to strive to keep up with the Chinese *and the natives*.[82] Indicative of the new homeland-centrism was an advertisement placed by the editor in the issue of November 15, 1918. It offered five hundred guilders to anyone who would contribute a year-long series of articles which provided an accurate account of the history of Hadramawt from pre-Islamic times until the present day.[83] By 1920, *waṭanīyyah* had become a dominant theme in the expanding Arabic press of the Indies. In that year 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh Bin Harharah, a student at the al-Irshad school in Batavia, probably did little more than reflect popular opinion when he wrote:

> The *waṭan*, as all intelligent people know, brought us up when we were children and educated us as we grew older. We drank from her water and ate from her food. We were shaded under her trees, she was our only refuge and our sole shelter. Indeed she is the mother who suckled us at her breast and embraced us within her: if this is the case the suckling naturally longs for his mother, and the understanding man yearns for his homeland as a camel yearns for its resting place.[84]

This passage is particularly forceful in the light of the fact that its author was the Indies-born son of a migrant from Hadramawt, who appears never to have visited his homeland.[85]

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[81] "Naḥnu Ḥaḍramiyūn qabla kulli shay'," *Al-Bashīr*, April 15, 1915, p. 1. For a similar view see also "Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-waṭan," *Al-Bashīr*, January 1, 1915, p. 1.

[82] The content of the first two years of *Al-Iqbāl* is summarized in B. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur," *Overdruk uit de Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 58 (1920): 189-240.

[83] *Al-Iqbāl*, November 15, 1918, as cited in *IPO* 48 (1918).

[84] "Wājibāt al-waṭan," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 1. The editor praised Bin Harharah for his high-mindedness and "understanding of the truths upon which progress depends."

[85] Some notes on his life can be found in 'Umar Sulaymān Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād bi-Indonesia* (ms.), vol. 1, pp. 120 and 127. On his father see Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL.

In explaining the rise of *waṭanīyyah* among the Hadramis, two different sets of influences, one internal and the other external, need to be discussed. The point was made in the previous chapter that the identity of the Hadramis was subject to multiple influences. Conditions within the colony pushed them towards an increasingly racial, "Arab" identity, while the international Arabic press, conveying the intellectual currents of pan-Islam, pulled them back towards identification with the worldwide Muslim community. Now in the twentieth century, these internal and external influences appear to have converged. It is possible to trace the intellectual antecedents of *waṭanīyyah* in the Middle Eastern press. Its pioneer was the Egyptian Rifa'ah Rafi' al-Tahtawi, who wrote of *ḥubb al-waṭan* (love of country) and *waṭanīyyah* in the mid-nineteenth century, selecting *waṭan* as his rendition of the French *patrie*.[86] The concept of territorial patriotism had been widely accepted by Egyptian intellectuals by the turn of the century, and was available to Hadramis in the Indies via the Egyptian Arabic press.[87]

At the same time, however, *waṭanīyyah* was not the only way in which identity was expressed. In his masterful study of Arabic intellectual developments between 1798 and 1939, Albert Hourani notes the appearance of three types of nationalism from the late nineteenth century: religious nationalism, territorial patriotism, and ethnic or linguistic nationalism. The *waṭanīyyah* expressed by "Pure Hadrami" and 'Alī Bin Harharah typifies the second category, which Hourani defines elegantly as "a sense of community with all who shared the same defined piece of land, rooted in love for that land itself."[88] So the question arises, why did the Hadramis find *waṭanīyyah*, rather than the other alternatives, to be the most meaningful expression of their identity? According to Hourani, territorial patriotism was most likely to appear in those parts of the Middle East characterized by a long-established settled community, relatively clear geographic boundaries, and a continuous tradition of independent administrative or political existence.[89] All of these conditions were fulfilled in Hadramawt and this helps to answer our question (although, of course, the Hadramis studied here were not living in Hadramawt). A more important factor, however, was the internal conditions of the Indies.

The notion that identity was bound up with one's land of origin was a reality which the Hadramis had seen demonstrated daily by both the Chinese and Indonesian communities. The rise of a homeland-centered nationalism among the Chinese encouraged the Hadramis, always conscious of the Chinese example, to view themselves in the same way. The rise of an Indonesian nationalism which rejected foreigners, even foreign Muslims, had forced them to abandon the pre-twentieth century sense of identity based on the Arabs being leaders of the Muslim community. The solution was to conclude that just as the Chinese belonged to China,

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[86] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 78-9. At the same time Ottoman intellectuals began to speak of the Ottoman *vatan*. See C. Earnest Dawn, "The Origins of Arab Nationalism," in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, ed. Rashid Khalidi et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 4-5.

[87] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 174; and Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 194. The above quotation from "Pure Hadrami" is reminiscent of the Egyptian leader Mustafa Kamil, to whom *waṭanīyyah* was "this noble feeling which spurs the members of the nation in their entirety to strive for a common purpose and a single goal." Cited in Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 206.

[88] Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 342.

[89] Ibid.

and the Indonesians belonged to the Indies, the Hadramis belonged to Hadramawt. To paraphrase the words of the editor of *Al-Irshād*, progress depended upon recognizing this truth.

From 1918 onwards, the story of Hadrami awakening is the story of the educational organizations which had begun with Jam'īyyah Khayr in 1901. Following their withdrawal from Sarekat Islam, the Hadramis who had previously been involved in the fledging Indonesian nationalist movement—men like Sayyid Ḥasan Bin Sumayt, Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Ḥusayn al-'Aydrūs, and Rubay'a bin Ambārak Bin Ṭālib, the former treasurer of TKNM—devoted their substantial energies and resources to the Hadrami educational organizations. In so doing they embraced and promoted the notion of Hadrami *waṭanīyyah*. It soon became clear that the most important vehicle of the Hadrami *nahḍah* was al-Irshad, the organization formed out of a split in Jam'īyyah Khayr in 1914. Al-Irshad is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ARAB ASSOCIATION FOR REFORM AND GUIDANCE

> Today it [al-Irshad] is the symbol of the Arabs and their manifestation here, the object of their hopes and their spirit.[1]

The Hadrami awakening came to life in three novel social institutions: voluntary associations, modern schools, and newspapers. They were intertwined in a complex way; as we saw in the case of Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim, the same men would often be involved in teaching, publishing, and organizational activities. Yet the associations were at the heart of the relationship. It was the associations which managed and funded schools. When newspapers began to appear, associations provided their audience by encouraging students to read and contribute to them, and by operating reading rooms for their members. The leading association of the Hadrami *nahḍah* was al-Irshad, the Arab Association for Reform and Guidance. Among the voluntary associations established by the Hadramis, al-Irshad was the most reformist in outlook, controlled the most resources, and wielded the most influence over the ideas of the Hadramis. By 1942 it operated a system of Arabic schools throughout the archipelago.

Like other Hadrami associations, al-Irshad assisted in the construction of a communal identity. While its name (the *Arab* Association) suggests that its founders identified as Arabs, the publications and concerns of the association reveal a strong sense of Hadrami-ness. The Hadrami homeland (*waṭan Ḥaḍramawt*) was an ever-present theme in the newspapers and magazines published by the association's members. While al-Irshad did not successfully extend its activities to Hadramawt itself until the 1930s, continual reminders that the Hadramis had a homeland elsewhere served to heighten their sense of separateness from the indigenous Muslim population. In this way al-Irshad, and organizations like it, helped to spread and reinforce the notion of Hadrami-ness which arose in the second decade of the twentieth century.

THE ROOTS OF REFORM

The establishment of al-Irshad marks the first serious split in the Hadrami *nahḍah*. Its genesis can be traced to the breakdown of the traditional Hadrami

[1] "Al-Irshād wa'l-Irshādīyūn," *Al-Murshid*, November 24, 1938, p. 10.

stratification system in the Indies. We have seen that the high status traditionally enjoyed by *sayyids* in Hadramawt had been undermined by the social conditions in which the Hadramis found themselves in the Indies. Individuals of low traditional status, like 'Umar Manqūsh, were able to grow wealthy in the Indies and even to attain a position of authority over the *sayyids*. Van den Berg noted in 1886 that despite these changes in social relations the niceties of customs recognizing descent from the Prophet were still observed: the hands of *sayyids* were kissed, they were seated in prominent positions in any gathering, and the taboo on marriage of non-*sayyids* to *sayyid* women was unquestioned.[2] Less than twenty years later, however, these symbolic acts were being challenged. The proud 'Umar Manqūsh refused to kiss the hand of a *sayyid*, and in Singapore in 1905 an Indian Muslim of non-*sayyid* descent married a *sayyid*'s daughter. When a local Hadrami religious scholar declared the marriage illegal, the case was referred to the editor of *Al-Manār*, the leading Islamic reformist magazine of Egypt. His resulting *fatwā* supporting the legality of the marriage was a shock to the foundation of the traditional Hadrami stratification system.[3]

The stratification system was also buffeted by the rise of Islamic reformism in the Indies. Islamic reformism originated in Egypt in the second half of the nineteenth century, stemming from concern with what some Muslim intellectuals perceived as the decay of Islamic society. Almost everywhere they looked around the Islamic world they saw Europeans ruling over Muslims—not only governing them, but demonstrating their scientific and technological superiority. This situation arose, the intellectuals argued, from a failure by Muslims to interpret and implement the teachings of their faith correctly. Over the centuries Islam had been corrupted by the incorporation of non-Islamic superstitions and innovations. To rediscover the true message, Islam must be purified of these alien elements through a return to, and re-interpretation of, its basic sources: the *Qur'an* and the *sunnah*, the words and deeds of the Prophet. At the same time Muslims needed to study modern sciences in order to regain their strength and prosperity.[4] Islamic reformism was espoused in the early 1870s by al-Afghānī and 'Abduh through their journal *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqā* (The Indissoluble Bond). Its later and more important mouthpiece was *Al-Manār* (The Lighthouse), a monthly magazine published in Cairo from 1898 and edited by 'Abduh and his student, Rashīd Riḍā. At the same time, ideas approximating Islamic reformism were being reached by intellectuals in many parts of the Muslim world.[5]

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[2] L. W. C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1886), p. 189.

[3] A description of the incident and the relevant *fatwās* can be found in Ṣalāḥ 'Abd al-Qādir Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā Al-Bābī Al-Ḥalabī, 1956), vol. 2, pp. 243-53. The incident is summarized in A. S. Bujra, "Political Conflict and Stratification in Hadramaut (I)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 3,4 (July 1967): 357-9.

[4] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), especially chapter six.

[5] It is important to bear in mind Hourani's warning that "we find similar groups of reformers in all the more advanced of the Muslim countries, and perhaps it is too simple to explain them in terms of the influence of al-Afghani and 'Abduh . . . *al-'Urwa al-wuthqa* could only have had its influence because there were already little groups of Muslims thinking on the lines which it made popular." Ibid., p. 222.

Although the Hadramis had access to the ideas of Islamic reformism from the late nineteenth century through the circulation of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqā* [6] and *Al-Manār*, the movement only gained impetus among them following the arrival of a group of reform-minded teachers from the Middle East. The outstanding figure, and the man among them who made the greatest impact on the development of Islamic thought in the Indies, was the Sudanese Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Sūrkatī. Sūrkatī was born on the island of Arqu near Dongola in 1875 or 1876. He came from an educated family; both his father and grandfather had studied in Egypt, and his father was a graduate of al-Azhar. Sūrkatī received his earliest education from his father, and succeeded in memorizing the text of the *Qur'an* at a young age. After completing a basic Islamic education in the Sudan, he traveled to Mecca to carry out the pilgrimage in 1896.[7] He remained in the Hejaz for fifteen years, receiving what has been described as "a 'mainstream' education with an emphasis on *hadith*."[8] In addition he was apparently in contact with the modernist movement in Egypt. His outstanding skills as a scholar were recognized around 1909 when he was awarded a distinguished teaching post in Mecca, a position which he retained until he was invited to the Indies by leaders of Jam'īyyah Khayr.

Considering the success he had attained in Mecca, one must wonder why Sūrkatī chose to accept the invitation of a small organization to move from the holy cities of Islam to a distant colony which, it will be recalled, had gained a reputation for oppression of foreign Muslims in the international Arabic press. Sūrkatī himself is said to have stated that he moved to the Indies because he felt that he could be of greater service to Islam there: "between my death striving for the faith in Java, and my death without striving for the faith in Mecca, I chose Java."[9] Sūrkatī's idealism and integrity seem beyond doubt; they are attested in the recollections of his Hadrami students and colleagues, tributes by Indonesian contemporaries, and the accounts of Dutch officials who knew him.[10]

Sūrkatī arrived in the Indies around October 1911. He was accompanied by two other teachers: Muḥammad bin 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd, also Sudanese, and Muḥammad al-Ṭayyib, a Moroccan who soon returned to his homeland.[11] They had been preceded by another teacher, the Tunisian Muḥammad bin 'Uthmān al-Hāshimī, who had

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[6] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 174.

[7] G. F. Pijper, *Beberapa Studi tentang Sejarah Islam di Indonesia 1900-1950* (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 1984), pp. 111-126; R. S. O'Fahey and M. I. Abu Salim, "A Sudanese in Indonesia: A Note on Ahmad Muhammad Surkitti," *Indonesia Circle* 59/60 (November 1992/March 1993): 68-9; and Bisri Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati: Pemikiran Pembaharuan dan Pemurnian Islam dalam Masyarakat Arab Hadrami di Indonesia," (PhD dissertation, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, 1991), pp. 24-9.

[8] O'Fahey and Salim, "A Sudanese," p. 70.

[9] *Edisi Khusus Perdana Suara: Riwayat Hidup dan Perjoangan Ahmad AsSurkati Al-Anshori dan Berdirinya Al-Irsyad*, ed. Ahmad Attamimi (Surabaya: DPC Perhimpunan Al-Irsyad Surabaya, n.d.), p. 10.

[10] A sample of the warm praise Sūrkatī elicited can be found in the following: Hi. Abd. Halim, "Bersama Guru Besar Syeikh Ahmad Soorkattiy," *Suara Al-Irsyad* 10,2/5 (October 1980): 13-15; HAMKA, *Ajahku: Riwajat Hidup Dr. H. Abd. Karim Amrullah dan Perdjuangan Kaum Agama di Sumatera* (Jakarta: Penerbit Widjaya, 1958), pp. 189 and 230; Ch. O. van der Plas, "De Arabische Gemeente Ontwaakt," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* 20 (1931): 176; and Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, pp. 114-26.

[11] 'Umar Sulaymān Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād bi-Indonesia* (ms.), vol. 1, p. 31.

come to the Indies in 1910.[12] As the senior figure among the teachers, Sūrkatī was appointed inspector of the Jam'īyyah Khayr schools.[13] His first two years in this position were a great success; the growth of the schools under his leadership was sufficient to warrant the introduction of four additional foreign teachers in October 1913. They were Aḥmad al-'Āqib, Muḥammad Nūr al-Anṣārī, Ḥasan Ḥāmid al-Anṣārī, and Abū'-Faḍl bin Muḥammad al-Anṣārī, Sūrkatī's younger brother. All were Sudanese by birth and in their twenties.[14]

The arrival of these teachers injected the spirit of Islamic reformism into the *nahḍah*. Their dedication to reformist ideals is evident in the fact that they continued to teach in reformist Islamic schools in the Indies for many years, making a significant contribution to Islamic education. To take one example, Ḥasan Ḥāmid later became the director and main teacher of classes run by the extreme-reformist organization Persatuan Islam in Bandung.[15] Some of the more conservative *sayyid* members of Jam'īyyah Khayr, however, were becoming increasingly concerned about Sūrkatī's influence on the Hadrami community, and in particular about his attitudes towards the *sayyids* themselves. Matters came to a head in 1913 when Sūrkatī, during a visit to Solo in the school holidays, was asked his opinion about marriage between a *sayyid* woman and a non-*sayyid* man. The case concerned a woman, the daughter of a *sayyid*, who was living as a concubine with a Chinese. Sūrkatī had suggested that money should be collected from the local Hadramis in order to release her from such shameful circumstances, which were apparently dictated by economic hardship. When this proposal fell on deaf ears, he suggested that one of the local Muslims should marry her. When the objection was put that her marriage to a non-*sayyid* would be illegal, he replied that it would be legal according to a reformist interpretation of Islamic law.[16] This dramatic pronouncement, made at a meeting of local Hadramis, quickly reached the ears of Jam'īyyah Khayr leaders in Batavia, and Sūrkatī's relationship with the more conservative *sayyids* among them deteriorated rapidly. He tendered his resignation from his position in September 1914.[17]

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[12] On al-Hāshimī, see H. Aboebakar, *Sedjarah Hidup K. H. A. Wahid Hasjim dan Karangan Tersiar* (Jakarta: Panitya Buku Peringatan Alm K. H. A. Wahid Hasjim, 1957), p. 231; H. Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Penerbit Mutiara, 1979), p. 307; Van der Lelij to Attorney-General, April 26, 1921, mr. 426x/21, located in A29 bis I: Corr. over Arabieren in Ned-Indie, MBZ, ARA; and Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 59.

[13] Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, p. 32.

[14] Ibid.; Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*, pp. 307-8.

[15] Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970), p. 20.

[16] A detailed analysis of Sūrkatī's position can be found in chapter five.

[17] "Al-Sūdānīyūn wa'l-'Alawīyūn," *Al-Irshād*, October 14, 1920, pp. 2-3. All later histories of al-Irshad contain a version of this event, although none highlight the central irony that the *sayyids* apparently found the idea of one of their women marrying a non-*sayyid* Hadrami more shameful than that she should remain the concubine of a non-Muslim Chinese. A later account of Sūrkatī's departure from Jam'īyyah Khayr written from the *sayyid* viewpoint does not mention the Solo incident, but confirms the general nature of the differences. Sūrkatī is accused of spreading anti-*sayyid* ideas and teachings contrary to the Shafi'i *madhhab*. Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah to Governor-General, June 10, 1931, mr. 951/31, located in vb. August 21, 1931, no. 8, MK, ARA.

Sūrkatī's resignation split the organization, and it also provoked a long and bitter division in the Hadrami community. His supporters, including his fellow Sudanese teachers, some reform-minded *sayyids*, and many non-*sayyids*, left Jam'īyyah Khayr with him. Although Sūrkatī initially intended to return to Mecca, he was apparently persuaded otherwise by 'Umar Manqūsh, the Arab *kapitein* in Batavia, and he opened his own school under the name Madrasah al-Irshād al-Islāmīyyah (Islamic School for Guidance).[18] Soon an organization was established to raise funds for the operation of this school under the name Jam'īyyah al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād al-'Arabīyyah (Arab Association for Reform and Guidance). It received legal recognition from colonial authorities in August 1915. With Jam'īyyah Khayr now crippled by the loss of teachers and supporters, al-Irshad was quickly to become the leading organization of the Hadrami *nahḍah*.

The aims of al-Irshad were derived from the basic premise that Muslims in general, and Hadramis in particular, found themselves in a state of backwardness and ignorance. Whereas they had once been a great and progressive people, now others had advanced while the Muslims remained trapped by inertia and apathy, as if they had been asleep for many centuries. The slumbering Muslims must be awakened so that they could achieve progress and take their rightful place among the civilized nations.[19]

According to al-Irshad there were two requirements for overcoming the backwardness of the Hadramis. These requirements are encapsulated in the association's name: instruction or guidance (*irshād*), and reform of Islamic practice (*iṣlāḥ*). In its early years it was guidance which took priority. This requirement was stated in the constitution adopted by the association in 1915, which indicated that its purpose was:

> to collect and maintain funds and spend them as follows:
> (a) to spread Arab customs which are consistent with the Islamic religion, teach the Arab community reading and writing, and promote the Arabic language, Dutch and other necessary languages;
> (b) to construct buildings and other things by which benefit will be obtained and the goal mentioned under (a) will be realized, such as a meeting place for members of the association, schools and other things which will promote general welfare and achieve the goal mentioned above, provided that it does not deviate from the laws of the land, good customs and public security;
> (c) to establish a library to collect useful books in order to illuminate the thoughts and educate minds.[20]

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[18] The leading al-Irshad historian today, Hussein Badjerei, states that the school opened on September 6, 1914. Hussein Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad: Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Presto Prima Utama, 1996), p. 32. This date must be open to question, however, because an account written by a former commissioner of Jam'īyyah Khayr states that Sūrkatī resigned from that association on September 18, 1914. All sources agree that al-Irshad was established after his resignation. Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah to Governor-General, June 10, 1931, mr. 951/31, located in vb. August 21, 1931, no. 8, MK, ARA.

[19] "Taqrīẓ al-Irshād," *Al-Irshād*, July 8, 1920, p. 1.

[20] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah: Al-Asāsī wa'l-Dākhilī* (Batavia: n.p., 1919), pp. 12-13.

This statement of purpose, with its stress on education, indicated that al-Irshad intended to continue the work of establishing modern schools started by Jam'īyyah Khayr. This is not surprising when we recall that the main founders of the association, including its first chairman, had been active in the older organization. The establishment of the al-Irshad school system, which spread across the archipelago in the ensuing decades, will be the focus of the following chapter. Here we need only observe that the establishment of schools with a modern, Arabic-based curriculum and structure was one of the key aims of the association.

The second basic aim of al-Irshad, reform of Islamic practice, came to the fore in a later statement of the fundamental principles of al-Irshad published by the al-Irshad central executive in 1938.[21] It summarized the nine fundamental principles of al-Irshad as follows:

> 1. The absolute unity of God, devoid of any hint of polytheism, manifest or hidden, in belief, action and words;
> 2. Upholding the religious observances including prayer, fasting, alms tax, pilgrimage etc., without neglecting any of them;
> 3. Revival of the true practice (*al-sunnah al-ṣaḥīḥah*) and abandonment of innovation;
> 4. Cooperation in piety and godliness, not in sin and enmity;
> 5. The duty to consider Muslims as brothers, without superiority of one over the other except in knowledge and godliness;
> 6. Commanding good and prohibiting evil, as far as possible in a friendly manner;
> 7. Abandonment of corrupt customs which deviate from the spirit of religion and violate honor;
> 8. Upholding self-respect and the honor of work, without submission to any other than God;
> 9. Upholding Islamic morality; in sum, to want for one's brother what one wants for oneself.[22]

In some respects this statement reveals al-Irshad as an orthodox Islamic association. Principles such as the unity of God, upholding religious observances, and commanding good and prohibiting evil would be recognized by Muslims everywhere. Yet by placing emphasis on revival of the true *sunnah* and the abandonment of innovation and corrupt customs, the association stressed the need for reform of Islamic practice. It thereby aligned itself with the Egyptian reformist movement, focusing its efforts on the elements of Hadrami Islam which it considered corrupt,[23] but occasionally commenting also on Indonesian innovations.[24]

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[21] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean Al-Irsjad* (Batavia: n.p., 1938). This pamphlet contains Arabic and Malay sections. The Arabic section is cited here. A similar formulation was already circulating among members as early as 1933; see "Muqaddimah," *Al-Irshād*, July 1933, pp. 1-2.

[22] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, pp. 3-4.

[23] The elevated status of the *sayyids* and the worship of saints came under particular attention in this context. The debate over these issues is discussed in detail in chapter five.

[24] G. F. Pijper, "Malam Pertengahan Bulan Sya'ban," in his *Empat Penelitian tentang Agama Islam di Indonesia 1930-1950* (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, n.d.), pp. 18-19.

The influence upon al-Irshad of such figures as Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh and Sayyid Rashīd Riḍā is evident in this pamphlet (where the views of both are cited with respect), and also in many other al-Irshad publications.[25] A close, cooperative relationship existed between the Egyptian reformists and the Indies movement. This cooperation was manifested, for example, in the early 1920s when Rashīd Riḍā recruited Egyptian teachers for al-Irshad schools.[26]

At the time when al-Irshad was formed, *waṭanīyyah* or patriotism was becoming a central theme in the Indies Arabic press. It should not be surprising, then, that the aims of al-Irshad also included the ideal of transferring "guidance and reform" to Hadramawt itself. This view was expressed by a contributor to the newspaper *Al-Irshād* in 1920:

> Everyone who loves his *waṭan* is obliged to turn his attention towards illuminating his *waṭan* with the lights of the sciences and knowledge, and to expend whatever he attains in its reconstruction. For the prosperity of a people lies in the prosperity of its *waṭan*, and there is nothing more beneficial to a *waṭan* than spreading sciences and knowledge among its people.[27]

This theme recurs repeatedly. In 1922, for example, when a group of teachers at the al-Irshad school in Pekalongan established a fortnightly magazine, their stated aim was "to strengthen the reformist bonds between the *waṭan* and the diaspora."[28] A contributor to the pro-Irshadi newspaper *Al-Ma`ārif* argued in 1927 that the Hadramis must work to reform their *waṭan*, citing the Indies Chinese, the Dutch, and the Jews as models of diaspora communities who had not forgotten their homeland. "There is no greater glory," he observed, "than the glory of rebuilding a homeland and endeavoring to reform it."[29] The annual report of the Surabaya branch of al-Irshad for 1935-6 declared that the organization "will never forget [the homeland] and will never neglect its duty towards it."[30] Yet despite the enthusiasm for undertaking reformist activity in Hadramawt, this aim proved difficult to achieve. For a range of reasons, as we shall see in chapter six, al-Irshad was not able to establish schools in Hadramawt until the 1930s.

AL-IRSHAD'S STRUCTURE AND GROWTH

In the beginning, al-Irshad was an informal grouping of like-minded individuals whose immediate aim was to raise funds to support Sūrkatī's school.

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[25] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, pp. 16 and 23. The reprinting of articles from *Al-Manār* was a common practice. See, for example, *Al-Shifā'*, July 1922.

[26] D. Ya'qūb Yūsuf Al-Ḥajī, *Al-Shaykh 'Abdu'l-'Azīz Al-Rashīd: Sīrah Hayātihi* (Kuwait: Markaz Al-Buḥūth wa'l-Darasāt Al-Kuwaytīyyah, 1993), pp. 259-60.

[27] "Al-Tamaddun," *Al-Irshād*, December 16, 1920, p. 2.

[28] *Al-Shifā'*, July 1922, p. 1.

[29] "Hal min yaqẓah ba'da al-nawm," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 30, 1927, p. 4.

[30] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia: Verslag Tahoenan 1935-1936* (Surabaya: n.p., 1936), p. 7. This publication contains Arabic and Malay sections. The Arabic section is cited here unless otherwise indicated.

Anyone who wished to join the group was required to commit himself, according to his means, to regular monthly payments from which teachers' salaries, rental for buildings, and other costs of running the school were deducted. In August 1915, however, the basic organizational structure of al-Irshad was formalized with the adoption of an official constitution. Except for some refinements added in the form of internal regulations in 1919, this structure was retained throughout the colonial period. The constitution stipulated that the association had its headquarters in Batavia, although membership was open to any Muslim living in the Dutch colonies, whether Arab or not, provided that he was male and at least eighteen years of age or married.[31] The supreme decision-making body of the association was the annual general meeting which was held at its headquarters every August and required a quorum of thirty members.[32] This meeting elected a central executive, to which all affairs of the association were entrusted between annual meetings and which was entitled in turn to appoint sub-committees. According to the constitution the executive should consist of a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and adviser, but in practice it could be a very large body indeed: the first three annual general meetings elected executives which varied between twenty-four and twenty-nine members.[33]

Al-Irshad was established as a fund-raising body, and effective management of the association's finances was a constant concern of the central executive. Awareness of the importance of finance to the association's activities was reflected in the oft-repeated aphorism *al-māl rūḥ al-'amal*: money is the spirit of action. Al-Irshad's income was derived from compulsory contributions by members (which were set in 1916 at a minimum of 1/2 guilder per month),[34] voluntary donations, and school fees. The relative importance of each source may be inferred from the treasurer's report for the first year, which indicates that the association received an income of 9,651.50 guilders between November 1, 1915 and November 30, 1916. Of this total, 43 percent was raised from members' contributions, 36 percent from donations, and 21 percent from school fees.[35] It was a substantial income considering that the average monthly salary of a teacher in the same period ranged from thirty to sixty guilders, depending on his qualifications.[36] Strenuous efforts were made to ensure the continuing flow of "spirit" to the association's activities, notably the appointment in December 1916 of a debt collector whose task was to ensure that members paid their contributions on time (he was rewarded for his endeavors with a percentage of fees collected),[37] and the stipulation that a member who failed to pay for three consecutive months could be expelled from the association and his debt retrieved through the courts.[38] Considerable attention was also paid to setting out detailed procedures for financial recording and annual

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[31] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn*, pp. 12-13.

[32] Ibid., p. 19.

[33] Ibid., pp. 13-14; Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, Arabic ms., pp. 3, 11, and 18.

[34] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 9.

[35] Ibid., p. 12.

[36] Ibid., pp. 1 and 8. Aḥmad Sūrkatī, however, was paid two hundred guilders per month.

[37] Ibid. p. 12.

[38] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn*, p. 18.

audits.[39] It could be argued that this almost obsessive concern with financial matters reflects al-Irshad's origins as an association of successful Hadrami traders. Certainly, the state of al-Irshad finances compares favorably with the often-parlous financial situation of its contemporary, Sarekat Islam.[40]

Although al-Irshad was established in Batavia, it quickly spread to other cities in Java and the outer islands of the Indies. It is possible that this development was not anticipated by the founders of the association; certainly the constitution adopted in 1915 made no provision for the establishment of branches. The first al-Irshad branch outside Batavia was established in the coastal Javanese town of Tegal in August 1917. The initiative for its establishment appears to have originated not from the central executive, but from a group of Hadramis living in Tegal who had heard of the success of the association in Batavia and wished to become involved.[41] Similar requests to form branches were received from Pekalongan in November 1917, from Bumiayu in September 1918, from Cirebon in October 1918, and from Surabaya in January 1919.[42] All of these requests were approved by the executive.[43] Each new branch elected its own executive committee and established an al-Irshad school, the opening of which was marked by a public reception attended, in some cases, by several hundred guests.[44]

The branches in Tegal, Pekalongan, Cirebon, Bumiayu, and Surabaya formed the backbone of al-Irshad for the remainder of the colonial period.[45] What sort of people joined them? The best guide to branch membership is a file on al-Irshad compiled by the British Consulate-General in Batavia in 1919.[46] This source is problematic because it was based on reports provided by one of the most vocal opponents of the organization, Sayyid 'Alī bin Aḥmad Bin Shahāb. Insofar as it can

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[39] Ibid., pp. 21-3.

[40] The contrast helps us to understand why the Hadramis who were involved in Sarekat Islam became so frustrated with the financial mismanagement of its leader, Tjokroaminoto.

[41] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, pp. 15 and 17. According to data cited by Husain Haikal in his dissertation, at least some of the founders of the al-Irshad branch in Tegal, including one of its two progenitors, Sa'īd bin Sālim Bā'ashir, had been leaders of a similar educational organization established in Tegal in 1914. This organization, coincidentally named al-Irshad, had, as its primary objective, the promotion of modern knowledge within the Muslim community. While its subsequent development is not known, it appears possible that the al-Irshad branch established in Tegal in 1917 was a metamorphosis of the earlier organization. Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), pp. 218-21.

[42] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, pp. 18, 27, 28, and 30.

[43] In the case of Surabaya, key financial supporters included Shaykh Rubay'a bin Ambārak Bin Ṭālib and Shaykh 'Uthman bin Muḥammad al-'Amūdī. Both were ex-members of the TKNM; their participation in al-Irshad confirms that the organization was a direct beneficiary of the Hadrami withdrawal from that committee and from Sarekat Islam as a whole. Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 327-8.

[44] "Pemboekaan Sekolah Al Irsjad Wal Islam Cheribon," *Neratja*, August 9, 1919, section 2, p. 1; and *Oetoesan Hindia*, July 23, 1919, as cited in *IPO* 30 (1919).

[45] The arguable exception is Bumiayu, where an earthquake in 1931 destroyed the school building and led to an exodus of Hadramis from the city. See "Arḥamu man fi'l-arḍ yarḥamukum man fi'l-samā," *Al-Iṣlāḥ*, February 17, 1931, p. 6; and "Sejarah Al-Irsyad Cabang Bumiayu" (Bumiayu: Pimpinan Cabang Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah Brebes di Bumiayu, unpublished paper, 1987).

[46] This file is an attachment to Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL.

be checked, however, the biographical information it contains appears to be accurate. The file lists 170 Arabs with links to al-Irshad. Of these, 123 are described as members of the organization, thirty-two as supporters, two as founders, and eleven as teachers in al-Irshad schools. The remaining two are described as agents for the British who had infiltrated the organization for intelligence purposes. But the distinction between these categories appears arbitrary (and the charge of spying has been denied), so it is ignored in this discussion and all are considered together as al-Irshad members.[47] The file includes members from each of the branches established by 1919 except Bumiayu, and therefore represents a reasonable cross-section of members from around Java. It lists fifty-four members living in Batavia, forty-two in Pekalongan, twenty-seven in Cirebon, eighteen in Tegal, and fourteen in Surabaya.

Out of the 170 people listed, the place of birth is specified in 158 cases. The majority were first generation migrants to the Indies and hence *aqḥāḥ* (pure) Arabs: 70 percent were born in Hadramawt, with a further 10 percent born elsewhere outside the Indies. The remaining 20 percent were *muwallad* Arabs born in the Indies, with the largest numbers originating from Cirebon and Batavia. This figure suggests that there was a pronounced dominance of first generation migrants within al-Irshad, a dominance which is particularly marked when compared to the contemporary estimate that only about 30 percent of the Arabs living in the Indies were first generation migrants, the remaining 70 percent being *muwallads*.[48]

Occupation is specified in seventy-four cases, with a breakdown as follows: trader/merchant, 46 percent; moneylender, 18 percent; teacher, 14 percent; property owner, 11 percent; and other (mainly professional), 11 percent. Although no figures are available for the occupations of the general Hadrami community in Java, the occupations listed here can be regarded as typical although they reveal, for obvious reasons, a disproportionate number of teachers. It should be noted that many Hadramis would have combined several of these occupations simultaneously. Finally, age is specified in ninety-four cases, with an average of forty-one years. On the basis of this data it is safe to conclude that the average al-Irshad member in 1919 was a man who was a first generation migrant from Hadramawt, around forty years of age, probably well established as a merchant, and possibly also a moneylender or property owner.

This picture of al-Irshad as an organization of *aqḥāḥ* Hadrami traders seems to change somewhat in the 1920s. By 1922 the initial five branches had been joined by four others in Indramayu, Ciledug, Cilacap, and Gebang—all towns or cities with small Hadrami populations.[49] Hence they appear to represent an expansion of the association beyond its original Hadrami base. Al-Irshad continued to expand throughout the 1920s, with new branches established not only in various towns of Java (Probolinggo, Banyuwangi, Buitenzorg, Bondowoso),[50] but in the islands

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[47] It is impossible to say what proportion of the total number of al-Irshad supporters this figure represents, but virtually all of the organization's leading figures from the time are included.

[48] Schrieke to Governor-General, March 18, 1921, exh. June 7, 1921 no. 58, located in A29 bis I: Corr. over Arabieren in Ned-Indie, MBZ, ARA.

[49] "Madrasah far' al-Irshād al-Islāmīyyah bi-Cilācaf," *Al-Shifā'*, July 1922, p. 98; and "Far' al-Irshād bi-Gebang," *Al-Shifā'*, September 1922, p. 136.

[50] "Nahḍah al-Irshād," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 9, 1927, p. 3; "Iftitāḥ madrasah al-Irshād (far' Bānyūwāngī)," *Al-Ma'ārif*, July 21, 1927, p. 3; "Al-Ḥaqq ya'alū wa lā yu'lā 'alayhi," *Al-*

outside Java as well. Branches founded in the outer islands included Sungeiliat (Bangka), Lhok Sumawe (Aceh), Palembang (south Sumatra), Ranau (south Sumatra), Pamekasan (Madura), and Labuan Haji (Lombok).[51] At a congress held in Batavia in 1931 it was announced that the association now had twenty-four branches, four of which were located in towns with no Arab population at all.[52]

The most intriguing example of this process of expansion is the branch in Ranau, a village in the Palembang residency in south Sumatra. In July 1927 the secretary of the central executive of al-Irshad, 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh Bin Harharah, traveled to Ranau to witness the official opening of the Ranau branch, accompanied by two men sent by the executive to become teachers at the new al-Irshad school.[53] The journey by boat, train, and car took two days, and 'Alī Bin Harharah remained in Ranau for fifteen days to teach the new members about the principles of the association. He found that the chairman of the branch was a local *haji* (one who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca) and its members consisted of coffee and rice farmers. The branch lacked resources; even chairs for the official opening had to be brought from the homes of members. This was a picture far removed from the life of the wealthy Hadrami traders who constituted the majority of members in Java. The school in Ranau received opposition from conservative local religious leaders who claimed that the teachings of the modernists lay outside the bounds of Islam, and it appears that the branch did not survive long. Yet it remains an important example of the expansion which was attempted by al-Irshad during the 1920s.

Despite the spread of the association to other cities, the constitution of al-Irshad was not modified to take account of the existence of branches. As a result the association evolved a loose and uncoordinated structure. On the one hand, the central executive possessed no authority over branch executives, which operated entirely outside the constitution. On the other hand, the central executive continued to be elected at an annual general meeting held in Batavia without provision for branch representation or even proxy voting. This was a formula for mutual frustration: the central executive was frustrated that its decisions were not implemented at branch level, while the branches resented the dominance of Batavia members over the central executive.

This frustration appears to have been felt particularly in Surabaya. In many ways the Surabaya branch of al-Irshad was the pace-setter of the association. Its leaders, most notably from the Bin Ṭālib and al-'Amūdī families, were men of wealth and vision. The first al-Irshad newspapers, *Al-Salām* and *Al-Irshād*, were published in Surabaya at their initiative, while their efforts in establishing a

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Dahnā', October 1928, pp. 14-16; and "Far' madrasah al-Irshād bi-Bunduwāsā," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-April 1929, p. 15.

[51] "Nahḍah al-Irshād," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 9, 1927, p. 3.; Yayasan Wanita Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah, *Dengan Penuh Iman Taqwa dan Kerja Keras Yayasan Wanita Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyah Pekalongan Mempersiapkan Hari Esok* (Pekalongan: n.p., 1993), p. 19; "Sikritir Jam'īyyah al-Irshād yaftataḥ madrasah Ranau," *Al-Ma'ārif*, September 1, 1927, pp. 1-2; "Irshād Pamākasān," *Al-Ma' ārif*, October 6, 1927, p. 4; and *Al-Jaum*, March 18, 1931, p. 3.

[52] "Nash'ah al-Irshād wa tārīkhuhā," *Al-Mishkāh*, July 3, 1931, p. 4. Subsequent reports of the opening of branches indicate that there were about thirty-one branches in existence in 1942 on the eve of the Japanese occupation of the Indies. Hussein Badjerei, "Dokumentasi 1938/41," *Suara Al-Irsyad* (1979).

[53] "Sikritir Jam'īyyah al-Irshād yaftataḥ madrasah Ranau," *Al-Ma'ārif*, September 1, 1927, pp. 1-2; and Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad: Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa*, pp. 104-5.

perpetual trust for the Surabaya al-Irshad school in 1924 were held up as a model for the rest of the association by Aḥmad Sūrkatī himself.[54] Their resentment of Batavia's dominance appears to have reached a peak in the late 1920s and early 1930s, when several al-Irshad congresses were held in an attempt to reform the structure of the association.[55] These congresses bore little fruit, although it is not clear whether the failure to amend the constitution was due to reluctance to cede authority on the part of the central executive, or to refusal by the colonial government to approve amendments which the executive may have proposed. In either case, it is clear that the branches continued to act largely autonomously.

A HADRAMI ORGANIZATION

At first glance, the expansion of al-Irshad appears to indicate that it became less a Hadrami organization, and more an Indonesian one, from the 1920s on. But a range of other evidence suggests the association retained a strong Hadrami identity. First, it is evident that the strongest and most influential branches were those, such as Surabaya's, which were located in large cities and dominated by Hadramis. In contrast, the few branches with a high Indonesian membership tended not to survive long. Ranau is one example, but the branches in Ciledug and Cilacap also appear to have quietly folded, and were only re-constituted in the late 1930s.[56] Secondly, al-Irshad's Hadrami identity can be seen in the language of its periodicals, which were invariably published in Arabic with, at the most, a small Malay-language supplement. This made it impossible for Indonesians who did not read Arabic to participate fully in the life of the association. Thirdly, and most importantly, leadership of the association remained in Hadrami hands.

In discussing the leadership of al-Irshad, it should be noted that according to its constitution, no *sayyid* was permitted to become a member of the central executive.[57] Their exclusion was, of course, a result of the conflict over the status of *sayyids* which precipitated Aḥmad Sūrkatī's departure from Jam'īyyah Khayr. But it would be wrong to characterize al-Irshad as an exclusively anti-*sayyid* association. *Sayyids* who fulfilled the membership criteria could and did join al-Irshad, and the association counted *sayyids* among its financial supporters, especially those—such as Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin 'Alwī al-'Aṭṭās—who were disillusioned with Jam'īyyah Khayr, apparently considering the organization too conservative.[58] More significantly, several *sayyids* occupied important positions within the association, including Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Abū Bakr al-Ḥabshī, the first president of the al-Irshad schools' committee.[59]

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[54] "Shukrān 'alā iḥsān," *Al-Dhakhīrah al-Islāmīyyah*, February 1924 (Rajab 1342), p. 373-8.

[55] "Al-mu'tamar al-irshādī al-'āmm," *Al-Dahnā'*, December 1928, p. 20; "Qānūn al-Jam'īyyah al-asāsī," *Al-Dahnā'*, January 1929, pp. 6-8; and Far' Al-Irshād bi-Sūrābāyā, *Mulakhkhaṣ Qarārāt li-Mu'tamar Al-Irshādī* (Surabaya: n.p., 1931), pp. 16-22.

[56] Badjerei, "Dokumentasi 1938/41."

[57] Jam'īyyah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād Al-'Arabīyyah bi-Batāwī, *Qānūn*, p. 14.

[58] Noer, *Modernist Muslim Movement*, p. 64. Aḥmad Sūrkatī praises the generosity of al-'Aṭṭās in "Shukrān 'alā iḥsān," *Al-Dhakhīrah al-Islāmīyyah*, February 1924 (Rajab 1342), p. 377.

[59] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 1. Al-Irshad's attitude towards the *sayyids* will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

The leaders of al-Irshad during the colonial period can be divided into two distinct and successive groups. The prominent figures among the first generation of leaders were Shaykh Sālim bin 'Awaḍ Bālwa'il, Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin 'Ubayd Bin 'Abdāt, Shaykh Muḥammad bin 'Ubayd 'Abūd, Shaykh Sa'īd bin Sālim Mash'abī, and Shaykh 'Umar Manqūsh, the Arab *kapitein* of Batavia. The first four dominated the central executive during its early years.[60] Manqūsh was never a member of the executive but he played a crucial role behind the scenes, and carried such influence that the central executive would meet at his request.[61] In many ways Manqūsh typified the first generation of al-Irshad leaders. All had been born in Hadramawt and migrated to the Indies as teenagers or in their early twenties. In 1919 they ranged in age from thirty-five ('Abūd and Mash'abī) to sixty-five (Bālwa'il), with an average age of about fifty years.[62] They had lived in Java for twenty to forty years. No reliable information is available on their educational backgrounds, but it is safe to assume that as non-*sayyids* from Hadramawt they were not well educated. The exception is 'Abūd, who was a teacher in the al-Irshad school in Batavia and has been described by Bisri Affandi as "the greatest scholar of Hadramaut in Indonesia."[63] All of them were successful traders, although their lines of business varied: Bin 'Abdāt traded *batik* and Mash'abī coffee.[64] Some were also substantial property owners, Bin 'Abdāt being the owner of the prestigious Hotel des Galeries, the second largest hotel in Batavia,[65] and Bālwa'il the owner of considerable holdings in Tangerang, near Batavia.[66] They were generous in using their wealth to support the association, all regularly contributing large sums in cash.[67] As a group they were respected by the colonial administration. Rinkes, a Dutch official of the Office for Native and Arab Affairs, described them in 1915 as "perfectly upright people in their way, without the least bad intentions."[68] The most prominent was, of course, Manqūsh, who served as the Arab *Kapitein* in Batavia from 1902 to 1931, and used his prestige and contacts within the administration to secure the rental of a building for the association's first school.[69] But Bālwa'il too became an Arab officer, serving as the Arab

[60] The successive chief executives are listed in ibid., pp. 3, 11, 18, 29, 41, 42, and 45.

[61] Ibid., p. 22.

[62] Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL.

[63] Bisri Affandi, "Sheykh Ahmad Al-Surkati: His Role in Al-Irsyad Movement in Java in the Early Twentieth Century," (MA thesis, McGill University, 1976), p. 69.

[64] Translation of an article published in *Al-Ahrām* on November 18, 1926, R/20/A/1413, IOL; and Schrieke to Governor-General, May 31, 1920, mr. 720x/20, MK, ARA.

[65] W. H. Ingrams, "Report on a Tour to Malaya, Java and Hyderabad," R/20/C/1066, IOL, p. 109. According to Hussein Badjerei, who managed the hotel for Bin 'Abdāt's son during the 1960s, Bin 'Abdāt built it in anger after he had been refused entry to the luxurious Hotel des Indes on the grounds that he was not a European. Personal correspondence, May 27, 1996.

[66] Dunn to Balfour, September 27, 1919, R/20/A/1409, IOL.

[67] See, for example, the list of monthly contributions in Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 4. Manqūsh and Mash'abī also donated land in Salemba (a suburb of Batavia) along with funds to build a school on it in 1920, in a *waqaf* (pious endowment) valued at about sixty thousand guilders. "Ma'tharah jalīlah," *Al-Irshād*, December 2, 1920, p. 3.

[68] Rinkes to Director of Justice, February 5, 1915, Hazeu Collection, KITLV.

[69] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," p. 223; and Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 26.

luitenant in Buitenzorg from 1929 to 1937.[70] Some of these first generation leaders had already been involved in other Islamic organizations. Bālwa'il, for example, had been a vice-chairman of Jam'īyyah Khayr.[71]

The transfer of leadership from these men to a second generation of leaders began about 1921. From that year on, the founders of the association withdrew from official posts while younger men took their places. The annual general meeting held in 1921 saw the election of Shaykh 'Abdullāh bin 'Aqīl Bājurāi to the position of secretary, an office he was to retain for many years.[72] At the time, Bājurāi was only seventeen years old. One of the first graduates of the Batavia al-Irshad school, he was now a teacher at the same institution. He was also a *muwallad*, born in Batavia in January 1904 to an indigenous Betawi mother and a father who was a migrant from Hadramawt.[73] 'Abdullāh Bājurāi's youth, education, and birthplace distinguished him from the middle-aged, Hadramawt-born traders who had led al-Irshad during its formative years. In all these respects he is typical of the second generation of leaders who came to dominate the association for the remainder of the colonial period.

Bājurāi was soon joined on the central executive by several of his former schoolmates. Among them were Shaykh 'Alī bin Sa'īd Bin Mughayth,[74] Shaykh 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh Bin Harharah,[75] Shaykh 'Umar bin Sulaymān Bin Nājī,[76] and Shaykh 'Alī bin Sālim Hubayṣ.[77] These second generation leaders were born in the Indies around 1900 to Hadrami migrant fathers and indigenous or *muwallad* mothers. They were in their twenties when they attained leadership positions. Among the first graduates of the al-Irshad school in Batavia, they all spent some time working in the various al-Irshad schools: Bājurāi taught in Batavia,[78] Bin Harharah taught in Tegal and later became the principal of the Batavia school,[79] Bin Nājī began teaching in Batavia, became the first principal of the Pekalongan school, and later returned to the Batavia school as principal,[80] and Hubayṣ was also a teacher for a short time before beginning work as a trader.[81] In addition to teaching, several of them shared an interest in journalism. 'Abdullāh Bājurāi edited the Malay edition of Sūrkatī's magazine *Al-Dhakhīrah al-Islāmīyyah* (The Islamic Treasury), Bin Harharah was an editor on the papers *Al-Shifā'* and *Al-Iṣlāḥ* and a regular contributor to the association's first newspaper *Al-Irshād*, and Bin Nājī edited *Al-Shifā'* and *Al-Irshād* as well as contributing articles to several other

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[70] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," p. 455.

[71] Another early leader of al-Irshad was Shaykh Ghālib Bin Tabī', also an ex-Jam'īyyah Khayr leader and former commissioner of the SDI.

[72] *Būrūbūdūr*, September 4, 1921, as cited in *IPO* 43 (1921).

[73] Interview with Hussein Badjerei (his son), Jakarta, January 18, 1994.

[74] Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, pp. 89 and 111.

[75] "Jam'īyyah al-Irshād," *Al-Ma'ārif*, September 1, 1927, p. 4.

[76] *Keng Po*, November 28, 1927, as cited in *IPO* 49 (1927).

[77] "Jam'īyyah al-Irshād," *Al-Ma'ārif*, September 1, 1927, p. 4; and Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, p. 129.

[78] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 25.

[79] Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, p. 120; and Gobee to Governor-General, November 23, 1932, mr. 1267/32, MK, ARA.

[80] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, pp. 8 and 23; and Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, pp. 113 and 120.

[81] Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, p. 129.

papers. Hence they were active participants in all three key institutions of the *nahḍah*: schools, organizations, and newspapers. The dominant role they played in al-Irshad is reflected in the fact that they all continued to occupy positions on the executive as late as 1939.[82]

Although the second generation of al-Irshad leaders differed from their predecessors in terms of age, education, birthplace, and occupation, their accession to the leadership was in many ways a natural progression. That they formed the first generation of al-Irshad students points to the fact that their fathers were among the earliest supporters of the association. Bin Harharah's father 'Abdullāh was an adviser to the al-Irshad executive from 1915 and became its treasurer in 1919,[83] while Bin Nājī's father Sulaymān was an adviser from 1915 to 1917.[84] 'Alī Hubayṣ, together with his brother 'Umar, was studying in Hadramawt when Sūrkatī opened his school; their father Sālim immediately called them back to the Indies so that they could attend it.[85] Thus these men represented continuity from the early leadership as well as change.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that leadership of al-Irshad remained firmly in the hands of Hadramis, or men of Hadrami descent. Despite the fact that any Muslim was permitted to become a member of the association, non-Hadramis appear to have recognized that al-Irshad was fundamentally a Hadrami association. The only indigenous Indonesians who played any role in the leadership of al-Irshad were three men elected as advisers to the central executive in 1916: Raden Gunawan, Raden Noto, and Tuan Hamzah.[86] Noto and Hamzah were re-elected in 1917, but all three appear to have played no role in the association beyond 1918.[87]

Little is known of Raden Noto and Tuan Hamzah except that Noto was a former associate of Tirtoadisurjo, whom he sued in 1904 for a breach of trust. Gunawan was a much more prominent figure, the leader of Sarekat Islam in Batavia and the vice-chairman of the central Sarekat Islam executive between 1914 and 1917. It seems possible that his involvement in al-Irshad was an attempt to form an alliance against Tjokroaminoto, the leader of Sarekat Islam. Gunawan attempted to establish a rival executive to Tjokroaminoto's, known as the Centraal Sarekat Islam for West Java and Sumatra, in 1915. Its inaugural meeting was held at the al-Irshad school in Batavia on January 30, 1916. This rival executive ultimately foundered, and Gunawan's involvement in al-Irshad did not continue for long afterwards.[88]

Even the Sudanese teachers who helped to found the association did not play an executive role. The pivotal figure among them, of course, was Aḥmad Sūrkatī.

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[82] Hussein Badjerei, "Dokumentasi 1938/41," *Suara Al-Irsyad* (1979).

[83] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, pp. 3 and 41.

[84] Ibid., pp. 3, 11, and 18.

[85] Interview with Abdullah Hubays (his nephew), Surabaya, January 26, 1994.

[86] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 11.

[87] Ibid., p. 18.

[88] Ahmat B. Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness (1855-1913)* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1995), p. 110; Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 57 and 77-9; and S. L. van der Wal, ed., *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indie* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1967), pp. 452-9.

Al-Irshad was founded in support of Sūrkatī's school, and much of its ideology must be traced to his influence. Outsiders often assumed he was the chairman of al-Irshad, and its leaders today regard him as synonymous with the association.[89] Yet Sūrkatī never occupied a position on the central executive. He exerted a continuing influence and moral authority over the association not by possession of office, but by means of his students. This point was made by 'Umar Hubayṣ, one of his former students, in 1929:

> [Sūrkatī] doesn't write much, so he doesn't have many publications, and he isn't a prattler, whose speeches are heard echoing in every meeting and club. On the contrary he chooses to work in the shade of silence, under the branches of peace and tranquillity, inclined towards creating eloquent men rather than silent books . . . This is his nature . . . So we cannot introduce him by his publications and books, or according to his speeches. We can only direct you to the students who originate from him.[90]

Like his fellow Sudanese teachers, Sūrkatī always remained an outsider, a Sudanese in an association of Hadramis, whose dark complexion, imposing figure and austere white attire created a distinct and unmistakable impression. The Sudanese teachers do not appear to have resented the anomaly of their position, nor did they seek to promote a vision of the association which encompassed all Muslims. Indeed, when Sūrkatī's brother Abū'l-Faḍl edited the newspaper *Al-Ma'ārif* in 1927-8, he repeatedly published articles which urged the Irshadis to work for the benefit of their homeland, Hadramawt.[91]

But why did al-Irshad admit Indonesian members at all? For Indonesian Muslims, the attractions of joining the association are clear. In 1924 Shaykh 'Umar Bin Nājī, representing the central executive of al-Irshad, stated to the second all-Indies Islamic congress that the association was willing to use its influence and funds to support the opening of schools around the country.[92] The central executive often provided branches with assistance in establishing a school; sometimes, as in the case of Ranau, by recruiting teachers, and sometimes in the form of financial support. In an environment where the demand for modern education far outstripped the capacity of the colonial government's school system, this offer would have been extremely attractive. But the motives of the Hadramis in admitting Indonesians are less easy to discern. Perhaps the formation of "Indonesian" branches can best be attributed to the paternalism of the Hadramis towards indigenous Muslims which, according to Sumit Mandal, originated in the late nineteenth century. This answer is hinted at in the report of the opening of the Ranau branch, where the Hadrami secretary of the central executive stayed on for fifteen days to teach the indigenous members about the principles of al-Irshad. There is no record of such remedial

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[89] Hussein Badjerei writes that "Surkati was al-Irshad. Al-Irshad was Surkati." Hussein Badjerei, "15 Syawwal: 69 tahun yang lalu," *Suara al-Irsyad*, 11,2 (July 1981): 4.

[90] "Khuṭbah al-Ustādh 'Umar Hubayṣ," *Al-Miṣbāḥ*, February 1929, p. 45. In this respect he was similar to Muḥammad 'Abduh, of whom Hourani has written "at heart . . . he remained a scholar, a teacher, and an organizer of schools." Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 134-5.

[91] See, for example, "Hal min yaqẓah ba'da al-nawm," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 30, 1927, p. 4; and "Akhbār Ḥaḍramawt," *Al-Ma'ārif*, September 22, 1927, p. 3.

[92] Report by E. Gobee on the second al-Islam congress, attached to Kern to Governor-General, June 11, 1924, mr. 460x/24, MK, ARA.

action being considered necessary for Hadrami-run branches; this action implies that the new Irshadis were less than equal members. The report is reminiscent of Muḥammad Bin 'Aqīl who observed at the turn of the century that "had the Arabs not traveled in these parts, then the people would have remained in their coarse savage state."[93]

CONSTRUCTING A COMMUNAL IDENTITY

Throughout the colonial period the leaders and core members of al-Irshad were Hadramis. Indeed, it seems that the organization helped to promote a communal sense of Hadrami-ness. Each branch of al-Irshad provided members with both a sense of belonging and a sense of separateness from the "outside" world of the Indies. The association looked after its own; its strong sense of insularity was evident, for example, in the existence of a committee which collected funds solely to assist the orphans of members who had passed away.[94] The function of the branches in reinforcing a communal identity can be illustrated by examining the activities of the Surabaya branch during the late 1930s.

Surabaya was the strongest and most active al-Irshad center outside Batavia, a fact which can be attributed to the size and wealth of the city's Hadrami population. The life of the Surabaya branch was centered around the al-Irshad clubhouse. Like other branches, the Surabaya branch established a clubhouse soon after its foundation, and a second was added in 1935. Both were managed by a committee of five and were primarily intended as meeting places. Members could gather there during the day to talk, to play chess and dominoes, and to catch up on the news by browsing in the library of magazines and newspapers in both Arabic and Malay. At sunset they would pray together, while in the evenings there were meetings, public lectures, and discussions.[95] The clubhouses were probably also the home of the crockery and other items which belonged to the branch and could be borrowed by members who were holding weddings, funerals, and similar events.[96]

One regular event on the clubhouse calendar was the annual general meeting, where the branch executive for the coming year was elected. The size and composition of the executive could vary. The Surabaya executive in 1936 was quite large, comprising ten members including an honorary chairman, chairman, vice-chairman, two secretaries, and treasurer. Being elected involved a considerable investment of time. In the 1935-36 year the executive held thirty meetings (more than one per fortnight), dealt with some two hundred items of incoming correspondence, and sent about 270 letters. It also managed the collection and expenditure of some seven thousand guilders in membership and school fees.[97] Apart from the routine administration of the branch and the maintenance of its finances, the executive was responsible for appointing and overseeing a range of

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[93] Sumit K. Mandal, "Natural Leaders of Native Muslims: Arab Ethnicity and Politics in Java under Dutch Rule," in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997), p. 194.

[94] "Al-Irshād wa'l-aytām," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 23, 1927, p. 2.

[95] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, pp. 34-6.

[96] Ibid., p. 3.

[97] Ibid., pp. 37-41.

committees, in which members could pursue their interests under the umbrella of the organization.

In the mid-1930s there were at least three such committees in Surabaya. The Committee for Preaching and Guidance comprised a group of teachers from the al-Irshad school who provided a program of public lectures held at one of the clubhouses every Wednesday night. The lectures were presented by both teachers and students and covered a wide range of subjects: the program for June 1938 included lectures on Qur'anic interpretation, stories of the prophets, a visit to Egypt, and lectures on how to improve the morality of the young generation.[98] For those who preferred discussion to lectures, there was the Committee for Discussion and Debate. As its name suggests, this committee held regular discussions at the clubhouses on a wide range of topics. These discussions were restricted to members of the association only. Intended primarily to improve the standard of thinking among members, they also enhanced the sense of camaraderie between them.[99]

Members who were interested in action rather than talk may have been attracted to the third committee, the Committee to Help the Poor. Established in December 1935, at a time when the Indies was suffering the effects of economic depression, this charity committee was the public face of al-Irshad in Surabaya. By means of direct appeals to members, whose names and contributions were listed regularly in al-Irshad periodicals, as well as indirect methods such as the placement of tins in shops and homes, it collected contributions which were distributed to poor families in the form of rice and cloth. First priority was given to widows, and then to families of disabled men. This committee achieved a considerable amount of success; after only eight months it had distributed more than 136 pikuls (8,500 kilograms) of rice and sixty pieces of cloth, and was supporting seventy families with its monthly distributions.[100] By 1938 the committee regularly supported over one hundred families with twenty-one pikuls of rice per month.[101] It also held occasional fund-raising events such as the large-scale celebrations of the Prophet's birth in 1938 and 1939, which featured entertainment by al-Irshad scouts (a movement which will be discussed in the following chapter) and the mass circumcision of fifty boys each year.[102]

Women and youth were not left out of the al-Irshad family. While women were excluded from membership of al-Irshad proper, a women's wing, called Nahḍah al-Mu'mināt (Awakening of the Female Believers), was established in 1930 by women living in Pekalongan. Its formation marks the entry of women onto the stage of the Hadrami awakening; unfortunately, little is known about its founders except that they were *muwallad* women married to members of al-Irshad. They aimed to spread the spirit of the awakening and ideas of modern education among women, and their chief activity was the organization of lectures for women at the local al-Irshad school on Saturday nights.[103] Nahḍah al-Mu'mināt soon spread to other cities. By the mid-1930s a branch had been established in

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98 "Akhbār dākhilīyyah al-Irshād Sūrābāyā," *Al-Murshid*, June 1938, p. 14. See also "Lamḥah qaṣīrah 'an Jam'īyyah al-Irshād Sūrābāyā," *Al-Murshid*, September 1938, p. 9.

99 "Akhbār dākhilīyyah," p. 14.

100 Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, pp. 28-33. One pikul equals 62.5 kilograms.

101 "Lamḥah qaṣīrah," pp. 11-12.

102 Ibid., p. 13; and "Ḥaflah al-khitān al-thānīyyah," *Al-Murshid*, May 1, 1939, pp. 9-10.

103 "Ḥarakah al-mar'ah al-'arabīyyah," *Al-Mishkāh*, September 16, 1931, p. 3.

Surabaya; its members gathered together on a weekly basis and also organized occasional public meetings, such as a special celebration for the birth of the Prophet held at the Surabaya al-Irshad girls' school in 1938.[104] The women's wing also arranged courses in religion and Arabic language, as well as house-to-house visits aimed at spreading the ideas of the *nahḍah* to other women.[105] It remained formally independent of the al-Irshad branch executive until the 1939 jubilee congress, which decided to reconstitute Nahḍah al-Mu'mināt as the al-Irshad Women's Section.[106]

For youth there was the al-Irshad youth wing, Shubbān al-Irshād.[107] Like Nahḍah al-Mu'mināt, it began as an independent movement which was only gradually incorporated into the main body of the association. The movement appears to have had its basis in the Waḥdah Mutakharriji'l-Irshād (Union of al-Irshad Graduates) established in 1930. This union was formed at a congress of graduates held at the al-Irshad school in Batavia in May 1930. Its aims included honoring Irshadis and their teachers, observing and promoting the principles of the association, and supporting mutual help among the Irshadis. For the latter purpose the congress decided to form a company in which all graduates of al-Irshad schools would be partners. It is unclear, however, what the company was to do, and whether it ever got off the ground.[108] Following the congress, branches of the union were established in various localities, including Surabaya. It later changed its name to Shubbān al-Irshād and held its own congress parallel to the jubilee congress in Surabaya in 1939.[109]

It was through working in these wings and committees, and most importantly through attending the al-Irshad clubhouse and the meetings held there, that being an Irshadi acquired meaning for individual members. Being an "Irshadi" was, for many members, more than just joining an association. To be an Irshadi was to belong to a group of people with similar origins and interests who worked together on committees, read certain magazines, debated the issues of the day, socialized together, and helped each other in times of difficulty. Above all else, al-Irshad was a community.

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104 "Akhbār dākhilīyyah," pp. 14-15; and "Lamḥah qaṣīrah," pp. 8-9.

105 Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, pp. 4-5 (Malay section).

106 Pijper to Governor-General, October 10, 1939, mr. 1219x/39, MK, ARA; and Badjerei, "Dokumentasi 1938/41."

107 "Lamḥah qaṣīrah," p. 10.

108 *Al-Iṣlāḥ*, September 22, 1930, as reported in *IPO* 43 (1930); and Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad: Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa*, pp. 141-2.

109 Interview with Hussein Badjerei, Jakarta, January 31, 1994. See also his "Potret Diri Pemuda dan Pelajar Al-Irsyad" (Jakarta, unpublished paper, 1992).

CHAPTER FOUR

EDUCATION AND IDENTITY: THE AL-IRSHAD SCHOOLS

Education is the foundation of all progress and the basis for all greatness, and it is the first cause of all success in the world.[1]

In the previous chapter, we saw how al-Irshad arose from the Islamic School for Guidance established by Aḥmad Sūrkatī in 1914. In the following twenty-five years, between forty and fifty additional schools were opened following the model laid down by Sūrkatī. Some of these schools functioned for only a few months, while others operated continuously for twenty years or more. The schools were central institutions of the association. "The axis of the work of the Irshadis revolves around the establishment of schools," wrote an al-Irshad leader in 1938 and, while the metaphor is confused, the meaning is clear.[2]

The al-Irshad schools were important for a number of reasons. Within the organization, they were a center for branch life. Every branch operated at least one primary school, which provided its *raison d'être*. Most of the energy and resources of each branch were devoted to its school, which was also the venue for many branch activities. The schools were also the training grounds of al-Irshad, where its leadership was recruited and groomed and where the values of the association were transmitted to successive generations. As the biographical sketches in the previous chapter showed, by the early 1920s most leaders of the association had been educated in al-Irshad schools. After graduating many of them taught in the schools where they had studied, passing the values of the association on to students who became, in turn, the next generation of teachers and leaders. Finally, and most importantly, the al-Irshad schools played a crucial role in the construction of Hadrami identity in the Indies. The existence of a separate system of schools for Hadrami children, their success in teaching *muwallad* children Arabic and orienting them towards further education in the Middle East, as well as explicit teaching about the duties of the Hadramis towards their *waṭan*, helped to shape a generation of students who identified themselves as Hadramis perhaps even more strongly than their fathers had.

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[1] Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb* (Surabaya: al-Maṭba'ah al-Islāmīyyah, 1915), p. 26.

[2] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean Al-Irsjad* (Batavia: n.p., 1938), p. 21.

Shaykh Aḥmad Sūrkatī
(Photograph provided by Hussein Badjerei)

A HADRAMI EDUCATION SYSTEM

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson demonstrated the importance of the "highly rationalized, tightly centralized" colonial education system in creating a sense of Indonesian identity among the diverse peoples of the Netherlands East Indies.[3] Anderson argued that the government school system, which provided a set of common educational experiences as well as a vision of the colony as a single unified state with its center in Batavia, helped young

[3] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 119-23.

Indonesians to see themselves as one people. Against this background, it is highly significant that the Hadramis were to a large extent excluded from this education system.

Colonial education, like so many aspects of life in the Indies, was structured along communal lines. At the primary level three institutions were crucial: European Lower Schools (ELS), Dutch-Native Schools (HIS) and Dutch-Chinese Schools (HCS).[4] As their names suggest, these schools were designed for European, Indonesian, and Chinese children respectively (although some mixing did occur, with a small number of Indonesian children attending ELS). All three types of schools followed a western-style, secular curriculum. The chief difference was the language of instruction. ELS students were educated in Dutch while HIS and HCS students received education in their native tongue as well as Dutch. All of these primary schools led into the Dutch-language high school system, where racial segregation no longer applied.

Very few Hadrami children entered this education system. In part this was due to the reluctance of parents to send their children to a Dutch school, for despite the avowedly secular nature of the government education system, many Hadramis suspected Dutch schools of having a Christian missionary agenda.[5] But even for those who had no religious objection to the schools, it was difficult to gain access to government education. A handful of Hadrami children were accepted into ELS. Most were the sons of Arab officers, although even this status did not guarantee admission: Hamid Algadri, the son of several generations of Arab officers in Pasuruan in east Java, believed that he was only admitted after his grandfather threatened to return the honors which he had received from the colonial government if his grandson was not allowed to attend the European school.[6] A small number of Hadrami children achieved admittance to HIS, but they were more often excluded on racial grounds.[7] The logic of the education system seemed to demand the establishment of Dutch-Arab schools (HAS) equivalent to the HIS and HCS. Such a step was urged on the government by the Arab representative in the Volksraad, Sayyid Ismā'īl bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās, in June 1918.[8] But it was over a decade before the first HAS was established. By 1940 there were only two government HAS in the country, located in Solo and Surabaya, with a combined enrollment of less than three hundred Hadrami children.[9]

If the Hadramis were by and large excluded from government schools, then where did they turn for education? The majority of Hadrami children studied at schools operated by voluntary Hadrami educational associations. Although the

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[4] European primary schools had been established in the Indies since the nineteenth century. The first HCS was founded in 1908, and the first HIS in 1914. For the purposes of this discussion, village schools have been excluded. An overview of the colonial education system can be found in S. L. van der Wal, *Some Information on Education in Indonesia up to 1942* (The Hague: Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation, 1961).

[5] Hamid Algadri, *Suka-Duka Masa Revolusi* (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia, 1991), p. 45.

[6] Ibid., pp. 44-5.

[7] Address by Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, July 23, 1934.

[8] Address by Ismā'īl bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, June 27, 1918.

[9] Van der Wal, *Some Information on Education*, pp. 14-17.

pioneering association was Jam'īyyah Khayr, first formed around the turn of the century, by 1920 al-Irshad had become the most important Hadrami educational organization.[10]

The significance of the al-Irshad schools lies in the fact that the system was parallel to, but never intersected with, the colonial one. Students could not cross between an al-Irshad school and a government school. While the government system may well have provided Indonesians with a sense of national unity, the al-Irshad schools inculcated a sense of separateness, a feeling that their students were outsiders even while they lived in the same territory as the Indonesians. The separate school system was, in itself, an impetus for the spread of "Hadrami-ness" among al-Irshad school children. But the schools deliberately retained and promoted a Hadrami identity in other ways, too. The manner in which this was achieved becomes evident upon a close examination of the educational philosophy and curriculum of the schools.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

It is important to consider the al-Irshad schools against the background of traditional Hadrami education. Education in Hadramawt consisted of three levels of schooling. At the lowest level was the primary school, where children learned to read and write based on study of the *Qur'an*. A small proportion of students continued on to secondary school, where they studied Arabic grammar, Islamic law, and theology. Both kinds of schools admitted only boys and, although free of charge, they were largely attended by the sons of upper-class, *sayyid*, and *mashā'ikh* families.[11] Exceptional students went on to study at the religious academies located in Say'ūn and Tarīm, institutions which were sufficiently famous to attract students from other parts of the Islamic world.[12] Even at this level, however, the only subjects for study were Arabic grammar, Islamic law, and theology. These subjects were taught by means of the classical commentaries of the great medieval Muslim scholars.

Until the late nineteenth century a similar, though more elementary, system of education operated for the Hadramis in the Indies. In the nineteenth century it

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[10] It should be noted that while the majority of students were the sons of Hadrami traders, a small number of Indonesian Muslims did study at al-Irshad schools. According to Noer, the Indonesian students were "mostly children of the *penghulu* (religious officials), traders, teachers and some government officials." He suggests that most of the non-Hadrami students, at least in the early years, originated from Sumatra and Kalimantan, but this point is uncertain. It appears that some Chinese Muslims also attended: one, at least, was Baba Moehammad Ma'soed, who later taught religious courses for the Partai Tionghoa Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Chinese Party) in Makassar. See Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 66; Denys Lombard and Claudine Salmon, "Islam and Chineseness," *Indonesia* 57 (April 1994): 130. Similarly, not all of the teachers were Hadramis. This was particularly the case in the early years, when Hadramis with the appropriate educational qualifications to teach in the new schools were rare.

[11] L. W. C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1886), pp. 86-9.

[12] W. H. Ingrams, "Education in the Hadhramaut," in *Records of Yemen 1798-1960*, ed. Doreen Ingrams and Leila Ingrams (London: Archive Editions, 1993), vol. 9, p. 590 (originally published in *Overseas Education*, July 1945).

seems that only a small proportion of Hadrami children born in the Indies received formal education outside the home. In 1885, for example, Batavia was home to 569 Hadrami children, but only forty attended school; in Surabaya there were 471 Hadrami children, but only about a hundred were school students.[13] This minority attended the so-called "Arab schools": small educational institutions established by educated Hadramis as a service to their community. There were about fifty such schools in the colony at the turn of the century, with a combined enrollment of fewer than one thousand students.[14] The schools were therefore extremely small, with an average enrollment below twenty. They provided the same education as the traditional primary school in Hadramawt, with a curriculum consisting of Arabic grammar, jurisprudence, and theology.[15] In this respect they also resembled the traditional Javanese Islamic schools, or *pesantren*. Indeed students studying in a primary school in Hadramawt, an Arab school in Batavia, and a *pesantren* in east Java would, to a large extent, study the same subjects from the same books.[16]

The Hadrami awakening brought a new vision of education. Indeed it could be argued that education was *the* issue of the awakening. It received overwhelming attention in the newspapers and magazines published by the Hadramis, a concern reflected in some of their titles: *Al-Ma'ārif* (Education), *Al-Miṣbāḥ* (The Lamp), *Al-Murshid* (The Guide), *Al-Irshād* (Guidance), *Al-Madrasah* (The School). The new model of education was first promoted by Jam'īyyah Khayr, but it was al-Irshad which became its most prominent representative.

Al-Irshad's educational philosophy originated from the familiar assertion that Islam had become corrupt. Instead of a religion, Islam had become "a collection of superstitions, a distraction and a game."[17] This corruption was blamed on the religious scholars, who should be the custodians of the religion, but instead had sold it out for worldly gain. As a result the Muslim world was in a state of decline, for the cornerstone of any civilization was its religion. "When a community's religion is corrupted, everything is corrupted for it."[18] The only solution for the Muslim world was to return to the true Islam. Since the basis of the true Islam was the twin pillars of the *Qur'an* and the *ḥadīth*, the Muslims must be "returned to the Book and the *sunnah* and made to understand that the best of all things lies in adherence to these two sources."[19]

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[13] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, pp. 105-6 and 160. It should be noted that there was also a custom, which continued well into the 1930s, of sending children back to Hadramawt for their education.

[14] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren Madrasah Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Moderen* (Jakarta: Lembaga, Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial [hereafter LP3ES], 1986), p. 59. Note that this was essentially the same figure reported by van den Berg, who found about fifty Arab teachers and not more than one thousand students. Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, p. 160.

[15] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, pp. 171-2.

[16] The *pesantren* tradition is described in Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982). On the curriculum of the *pesantren*, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script used in the Pesantren Milieu," *BKI* 146 (1990): 226-69.

[17] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 5.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., p. 1.

Education was viewed as the best means to overcome the problems of the corruption of Islam and the decline of Islamic civilization. Implicit throughout was the view that society must be changed by changing the hearts and minds of the young. Al-Irshad was not interested in politics; at least, it was not interested in changing governments or reforming political structures. For the Irshadis, the decline of Islam could not be blamed on European colonialism or the rule of non-believer over Muslim, because Islamic religion and civilization displayed the same symptoms of decline whether in the Dutch-controlled Indies or the still-independent Hadramawt. The cause of the decline lay in the Muslims themselves, and it could only be overcome by changing the way Muslims viewed their religion and the world.

According to the al-Irshad philosophy, education involved more than the transmission of knowledge. The most fundamental purpose of education was moral:

> Schools are houses of knowledge and institutes of instruction and training, but the best schools are those which are concerned with improving morality and training the roots. The best education is that which is based on religion and reforming beliefs. He who does not fear God in private and in public has no virtue, though he may possess high diplomas and speak many languages . . . The true Islamic schools are those which are concerned with filling the hearts with fear of God, and there is no good for the Muslims in anything else.[20]

Accordingly, Islam formed the basis of al-Irshad education, which in this respect shared common ground with traditional Hadrami schools. Al-Irshad argued that all Muslim children should receive, first of all, training in Islam.

But the nature and purpose of this Islamic education was new. Al-Irshad expounded an openly modernist approach towards Islamic education. Traditional schools had focused on the study of the great works of commentary by medieval Muslim scholars, devoting relatively little attention to the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth*.[21] Al-Irshad, on the other hand, aimed to equip students to read and interpret (*ijtihād*) these two sources for themselves. This was in accordance with the belief that "performing *ijtihād* to understand the *Qur'an* and *sunnah* of the Prophet is obligatory for every person."[22] Without this ability a Muslim was forced to follow the interpretation of others, and was therefore liable to be led into precisely the superstitions and innovations which had caused the decline of Islam in the first place.

Students found this approach to Islamic education empowering, and felt that they were being taught to think critically and independently about their religion.[23] One Javanese student, Muhammad Zayn bin Haji Hasbullah Satri, wrote in 1920 of his changed attitude towards Islam:

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[20] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[21] Van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning," pp. 253-5.

[22] Aḥmad Sūrkatī, *Tiga Persoalan* (Jakarta: Pimpinan Pusat Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah, 1988), p. 21. This is the Indonesian translation of his *Al-Masā'il Al-Thalāth*, first published in Batavia in 1925.

[23] Interview with A. Hamid Attamimi, who attended an al-Irshad school from the late 1930s. Jakarta, January 4, 1994.

> We . . . used to hate Islam. We anticipated that it would meet with disaster and we wished that we and our people believed in another religion, one of the religions whose people were great in our eyes. We thought that the backwardness of the Javanese people was caused by our belief in this ossified religion filled with superstitions . . . and in our hatred of the religion we hated the Arab race, since it was they who brought us this contrary, inverted religion. This was the situation of the educated before. As for [the situation in] recent years, and particularly since the Javanese land was honored by the feet of the wise teacher Aḥmad Muḥammad Sūrkatī al-Anṣārī, our cultural situation has changed. The real face of Islam, of which we had known the name but not the reality, has been revealed.[24]

Another student, Muhammad Rasjidi, later recalled that he was encouraged to think independently about religion for the first time when he entered an al-Irshad school. Interestingly, he contrasted his experience to his previous education at a Muhammadiyah school, which was also modernist in its approach. His earlier education, as Rasjidi remembered it, had been little more than "just memorizing from 'there' to 'there'."[25]

In order to be able to read the *Qur'an* and *sunnah*, knowledge of the Arabic language was crucial. Arabic was regarded as the "key" to the *Qur'an*, which the Irshadis, like most Muslims, believed could not be translated.[26] Hence knowledge of Arabic was a prerequisite for Islamic education. Yet the importance of teaching Arabic was not limited to this religious purpose. According to al-Irshad, the Arabic language was part of the national heritage of the Hadramis. Moreover, Arabic had been glorified above all other languages by God, who had chosen it as the eternal repository of His laws.[27] All Hadrami students should therefore learn to speak, read and write their own language:

> The merit of al-Irshad and its pride were, and will be, in accordance with its service to Arabic, and in accordance with remaining a fortress and a refuge to [Arabic] and to Islam. In this lies the pride of all Arabs in this country.[28]

The importance placed on achieving fluency in Arabic was already evident in 1915, when the Batavia school committee decided that it should appoint teachers able to teach Arabic according to the Berlitz method.[29] At the Surabaya school, students were required to speak Arabic at all times. K. H. Anwar Zain, a former student, recalled some fifty years later how the school principal, 'Umar Hubayṣ,

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[24] "Al-Dīn al-Ṣaḥīḥah (II)," *Al-Irshād*, November 4, 1920, p. 2.

[25] Endang Basri Ananda, *70 Tahun Prof. Dr. H. M. Rasjidi* (Jakarta: Harian Umum Pelita, 1985), pp. 6-8.

[26] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 10.

[27] Ibid., pp. 9-11.

[28] Ibid., p. 14.

[29] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, Arabic ms., p. 1.

had punished him for breaking this rule.[30] Al-Irshad's emphasis on teaching Indies-born Hadramis to speak Arabic must be considered in the light of van den Berg's 1886 observation that many *muwallads* who did not attend school and were raised by their Indonesian mothers were no longer able to speak Arabic fluently.[31] Promoting fluency in Arabic is one of several respects in which al-Irshad education effectively counteracted an assimilative tendency; in this case, by making the *muwallads* aware that they possessed a tongue which was not only different from any Indonesian language, but had been chosen by God above all other languages. By re-learning their "mother" tongue, and by taking pride in it, Hadrami students were implicitly learning to view themselves as a race apart from the indigenous Indonesians. In effect, their sense of Hadrami-ness was heightened by the use of Arabic as a language of instruction.

Once students had acquired a knowledge of Arabic, along with basic educational and moral training in Islam, they should be encouraged to begin study of modern sciences and other languages. Such education was regarded as a requirement of the age and place in which the students lived, however, whereas Islamic and Arabic education had universal and eternal value. Students must master modern sciences in order to compete economically with educated Chinese and Indonesians. The ultimate purpose was to enable the students to become "all-round men and self-made men."[32] In other words, modern education was intended to train students to be able to support themselves independently, a natural virtue for a small migrant community.

The value of self-reliance was stressed repeatedly. A former pupil of the al-Irshad Batavia school recalled Aḥmad Sūrkatī gathering the students together to warn them that this was not the place to learn to become a government official. If any student aspired to work for the government, then he was advised to pack his bags and return home. Al-Irshad education was intended to implant an independent spirit in the students.[33] A pamphlet promoting al-Irshad expressed the same contempt for government service, arguing against educating children to become "stuffing for government offices."[34] On the contrary, it contended:

> The best school for the son of a Muslim is that which endears virtue to his soul and reforms belief and makes him free and independent in thought and vision, relying upon God, then upon himself, hoping for reward and fearing punishment.[35]

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[30] *Edisi Khusus Perdana Suara: Riwayat Hidup dan Perjoangan Ahmad AsSurkati Al-Anshori dan Berdirinya Al-Irsyad*, ed. Ahmad Attamimi (Surabaya: DPC Perhimpunan Al-Irsyad Surabaya, n.d.), p. 37.

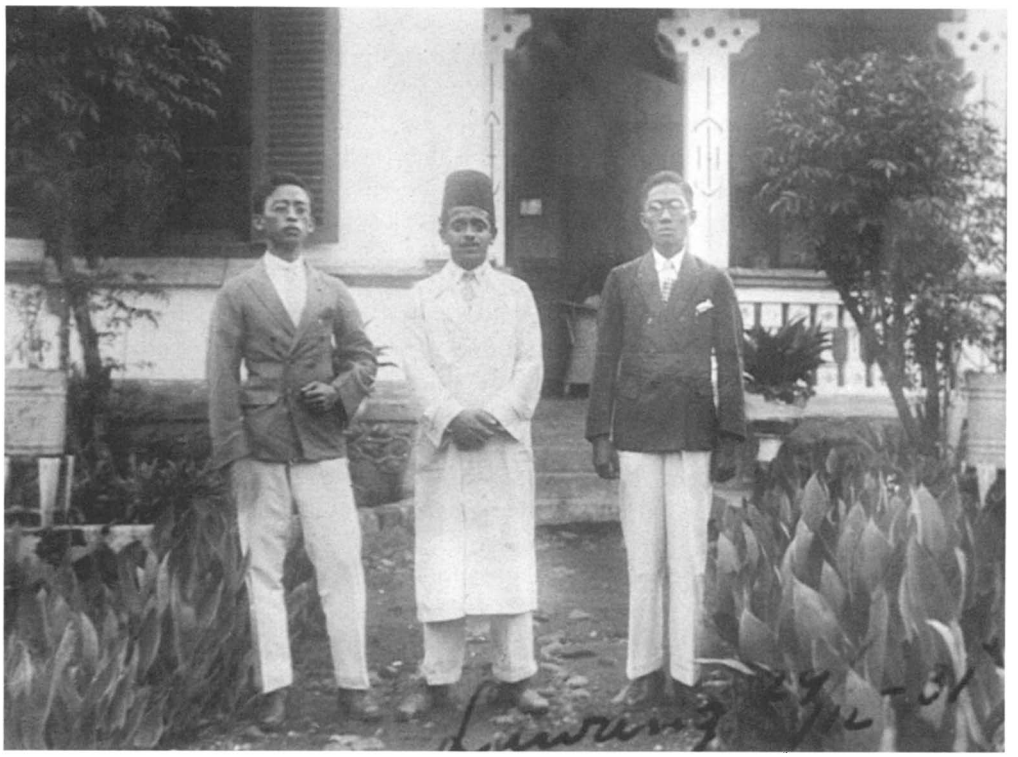
[31] Van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout*, pp. 213-15.

[32] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 7 (Malay section).

[33] Hi. Abd. Halim, "Kesan dan Kenangan dari Kehidupan Guru Besar Syeikh Ahmad Soorkatti Alanshory," *Suara Al-Irsyad* 10,6 (November 1980): 18-19.

[34] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 13.

[35] Ibid., p. 14.



Teachers at the al-Irshad boarding school in Lawang, East Java, December 1931
(Photograph provided by Hussein Badjerei)

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the al-Irshad boys' school in Surabaya illustrates how al-Irshad's educational philosophy was put into practice.[36] It should be noted that not all al-Irshad schools followed the same curriculum. As observed in the previous chapter, the branches of al-Irshad enjoyed a high degree of autonomy, and it was to be expected that the schools would develop differently in different regions. Despite repeated calls to implement a standard curriculum, made particularly by Sūrkatī himself, and a resolution to the same effect passed by the al-Irshad

[36] The curriculum on which the following is based is outlined in Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia: Verslag Tahoenan 1935-1936* (Surabaya: n.p., 1936), pp. 14-23.

teachers' congress in 1927, this diversity remained.[37] Nevertheless the al-Irshad schools retained many common elements, due to the fact that most of the teachers had themselves been students at al-Irshad schools, and the Surabaya curriculum can be taken as representative, at least in broad outline.

Most al-Irshad schools were primary schools.[38] Although it is difficult to gauge, the average number of students in a school was probably between one and two hundred.[39] In these respects at least, the Surabaya school was fairly typical. Its program comprised three years of pre-school for boys at least six years of age, followed by six years of primary school for those who had completed the pre-school course or its equivalent. The curriculum stressed Arabic language and Islamic education in the early years, with the gradual addition of non-religious subjects as the students progressed.

The pre-school curriculum was dominated by Arabic language subjects: memorization of Arabic vocabulary, conversation, reading aloud, writing and dictation and, in the third year, composition. In some of these subjects, textbooks imported from the Middle East were used. In addition there were two Islamic subjects: the holy *Qur'an*, which consisted of memorizing verses from the *Qur'an*, and a catch-all subject called religion and training, which was presumably intended to ensure that students who did not continue their education were able to carry out their basic duties as Muslims. This subject included training in Islamic ritual, such as performing ablutions and the five daily prayers; basic theology, including the unity of God and obedience to Him; and basic moral education, including good behavior, respect and obedience to parents, and cleanliness. The subject was also designed to inculcate al-Irshad's modernist approach to Islam, for it included the topics "whose hands should we kiss?" (the answer appears to have been: only the hands of our parents) and, for third-year students, "rejection of seeking help from graves, amulets, spells and soothsayers, with mention of the notorious innovations and the punishment which God prepares for those who practice them."[40] The latter was directed against traditional Muslims, both in the Indies and in Hadramawt, who engaged in such practices in the form of the cult of saints.[41] The pre-school curriculum also included three non-Islamic subjects: arithmetic, sports, and (from the second year) Latin script.

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[37] 'Umar Sulaymān Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād bi-Indonesia* (ms.), pp. 105-6; "Mu'tamar al-mu'allimīn," *Al-Ma'ārif*, May 12, 1927, p. 1; and "Qarārāt mu'tamar al-mu'allimīn," *Al-Ma'ārif*, June 16, 1927, p. 4.

[38] It should be noted that some of the al-Irshad school buildings were also the venue for adult education classes in the evenings. For example, in 1920 the Surabaya branch advertised night classes for adults. The classes incorporated both Islamic and non-Islamic subjects. "Ta'līm laylī li'l-kibār," *Al-Irshād*, November 11, 1920, p. 3.

[39] The Banyuwangi school, for example, had 130 students in 1931, Pekalongan had no less than two hundred in 1933, Tegal had one hundred in 1938, and Surabaya had 130 in 1920 and three hundred by 1933. "Alirsjad Banjoewangi," *Al-Jaum*, September 2, 1931, p. 3; D. Ya'qūb Yūsuf Al-Ḥajī, *Al-Shaykh 'Abdu'l-'Azīz Al-Rashīd: Sīrah Hayātihi* (Kuwait: Markaz Al-Buḥūth wa'l-Darasāt Al-Kuwaytīyyah, 1993), pp. 523-6; address by 'Abdullāh bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, July 25, 1938; and *Pewarta Soerabaja*, January 19, 1920, as cited in *IPO* 6 (1920).

[40] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 14.

[41] Alexander Knysh, "The Cult of Saints in Hadramawt: An Overview," *New Arabian Studies* 1 (1993): 137-52.

Like the pre-school curriculum, the primary school curriculum was divided into three sections: Arabic language and script, religious sciences, and other sciences. The most significant difference was that the non-Islamic component of the curriculum was given greater weight. The Arabic language subjects differed little from pre-school. Most of these subjects were taught from Middle Eastern textbooks, and it was expected that students could speak and read Arabic fluently upon completion of the program. The religious subjects, on the other hand, were much more comprehensive than in pre-school. They included "reading the *Qur'an* with an understanding of some of its verses," jurisprudence and its basic principles, religious duties, and doctrine and training.[42] Once again the religious curriculum revealed its modernist origins. It stressed understanding the principles behind Islamic law and the avoidance of innovations. Unlike a traditional Hadrami school, where the classical texts of Islamic jurisprudence would have been studied at this stage, the textbooks were modern books written specifically for school children. In addition, senior students read Muḥammad 'Abduh's exegesis of the *Qur'an*, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, and Shaykh Aḥmad Sūrkatī's exposition of basic modernist principles, *Al-Masā'il al-Thalāth* (The Three Problems).[43]

Of particular interest to us are the "general subjects" in the primary school curriculum. These were the subjects, it will be recalled, considered necessary for progress in the modern colony. They included the following: geography, history, arithmetic, geometry, scientific principles, health, bookkeeping, sport, Malay, Dutch, education, and teaching (for year six only).[44] These subjects were taught from a wide range of perspectives and textbooks. History, for example, meant Islamic history which was taught from an Arabic textbook. Geography, on the other hand, appears to have focused on the geography of the Indies.[45] Arithmetic appears to have been taught from an Arabic translation of an English textbook by a Mr. Tweedy, except for the final year when the students used a Dutch textbook. Bookkeeping, in contrast, was taught from a Malay text produced by the colonial government's accounting service, *Peladjaran Memegang Boekoe Dagang* (Lessons in Bookkeeping). Malay and Dutch were taught from textbooks used in other Indonesian schools; the latter from the appropriately-titled *Djalan kebarat: Ons Eigen Boek* (The Way West: Our Own Book).

The overall impression is that the "general subjects" were intended to equip students to become independent, modern traders. The inclusion of bookkeeping in the curriculum is the most obvious sign of this, but there are other indications as well: the mathematics curriculum includes calculations for commercial purposes, while the Malay and Arabic language courses both incorporate commercial correspondence. Among the topics for advanced Arabic conversation classes, moreover, we find "different shops and what is sold in them," and "the duties of shop-owners and assistants with respect to organization, cleanliness and honesty," while no other occupations are mentioned. Graduates of the schools were clearly

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[42] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 16.

[43] Ibid., pp. 16-18.

[44] Ibid., pp. 21-3.

[45] It is not clear whether geography was taught from an Arabic textbook or a Malay one. In al-Irshad's early years, the policy of using Arabic textbooks meant that students learned about the geography of Arabia rather than the Indies. For this point I am indebted to Dr. Martin van Bruinessen.

expected to become merchants, following, in most cases, in the footsteps of their fathers.

The Surabaya school, like most al-Irshad schools, provided little more than primary education. For most students this seemed to be sufficient, and demand for education beyond the primary level appears to have been low. Al-Irshad teachers often complained that parents withdrew their children from primary school too early, so that they could work in the family business.[46] Nevertheless there were some students who wished to continue their education further. For this group the options were limited. Education at a government high school was impossible, because their primary education did not equip students to study in a Dutch-language school.[47] The most talented students from the branch primary schools were often directed towards the Batavia school, the *Internaat al-Irshad*, which was considered the "mother school" of the association,[48] and formed the pinnacle of its education system. It appears that this was the only school which offered a full seventeen-year program, consisting of pre-school (three years), primary school (five years), preparatory school (two years), teachers' school (five years), and specialist school (two years) for those with interest in advanced religious study.[49]

Graduates from the Batavia school, in turn, appear to have looked towards Egypt, a country which possessed one of the most modern education systems in the Arab world, to continue their studies. A prominent example was Shaykh Ṣalāḥ bin 'Abdulqādir al-Bakrī, who was educated at the al-Irshad school in Batavia. After some years teaching at the al-Irshad schools in Bumiayu and Pamekasan, he traveled to Cairo around 1930 where he continued his education at a government high school.[50] In 1931 he was described as the leader of the former al-Irshad students studying in Cairo, an ascription which suggests that a not insignificant number of other ex-students were following the same path.[51]

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[46] See, for example, "Khulāṣah khuṭbah al-Ustādh 'Umar Hubayṣ," *Al-Miṣbāḥ*, February 1929, p. 59.

[47] It is worth noting that a minority view within the association held that its schools should feed into the higher levels of the Dutch colonial education system, and some tentative steps were taken in this direction. A private HAS was established by al-Irshad in Batavia around 1932. Modelled on the HIS and HCS, this school adhered to the government curriculum, with the addition of Arabic and Islamic studies. The school was intended to be a bridge into Dutch higher education for Hadrami children, but interest among the Hadramis appears to have been quite low; it was noted in 1938 that 80 percent of the pupils were Indonesian. Similarly in Surabaya, al-Irshad twice attempted to establish a *schakelschool* (link school). The school was to adhere to the government primary school curriculum together with Arabic and religious studies, providing a program which would enable students to continue their education at government high schools. Both attempts failed due to the lack of demand for such education among the Hadramis. See *Sin Po*, November 30, 1932, as cited in *IPO* 49 (1932); address by 'Abdullāh bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, July 25, 1938; and "Al-Ijtimā ' fi'l-irshād," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-May 1929, pp. 18-19.

[48] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 19.

[49] Interview with Abullah al-Ansari, Jakarta, January 16, 1994. This is the program outlined in H. Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Penerbit Mutiara, 1979), pp. 307-14. Note that al-Ansari, who passed through all levels of education at the school, includes two more years in the program than Yunus: five years instead of four at the primary school and teachers' school levels.

[50] "Fāza wa iltaḥaq," *Al-Iṣlāḥ*, March 10, 1931, p. 6; and Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, pp. 121 and 127.

[51] "Al-Irshad dan Congres Alam Islam di Palestine," *Al-Jaum*, December 5, 1931, p. 2.

The fact that al-Irshad education fed ultimately into an overseas education system, rather than one in the Indies, suggests a further means by which al-Irshad schools inculcated a sense of separateness from the indigenous population. Anderson has argued that the colonial education system caused students from all parts of the archipelago to sense that they were on an upward "pilgrimage" toward the ultimate destination of Batavia, the pinnacle of the education system; and this pilgrimage gave them a shared sense of identity.[52] For al-Irshad students, on the other hand, the object of their educational "pilgrimage" was Cairo. This outward orientation, back to the Middle East from whence their fathers had come, helped the Hadrami students to see that their center was not "here" in the Indies, but rather "there" in the heartland of the Arab world. It should be noted that for many, the Middle East was not a temporary destination but a permanent one. Al-Bakrī, for example, followed his education in Cairo with a successful career as a teacher and radio broadcaster in the Hejaz.[53]

Although most school students were boys, al-Irshad also promoted the education of girls. In support of this stance it cited the *ḥadīth*: "Seeking knowledge is a duty of every Muslim, male and female."[54] In some places female students were admitted to the same schools as males. Forty of the 130 students at the Banyuwangi school in 1931 were female, for example,[55] while Abdullah al-Ansari, a student at the Batavia school in the 1920s, recalled male and female students being seated at one desk, a dramatic break with tradition in Hadrami schools.[56] Where resources permitted, however, separate schools for girls were preferred. The first al-Irshad school for girls was established in Pekalongan in 1929, and immediately attracted over one hundred students (it can be no coincidence that the women's branch of the association, Nahḍah al-Mu'mināt, had its origins in the same city).[57] A girls' school was also established in Surabaya.

The curriculum of these schools varied from that of the boys' schools. Girls were provided with the same Islamic education as boys, for the obligation of *ijtihād* fell also upon them. In respect to modern sciences, however, their needs were perceived as different from those of boys. Thus the curriculum at the first girls' school in Pekalongan consisted of "the Islamic religion, *Qur'an* and its interpretation, jurisprudence, history, Arabic, and other important arts like embroidery, sewing and the principles of cooking."[58] Whereas the boys were being prepared to work as modern traders, the girls were being trained for life as devout housewives. The same was the case at the girls' school in Surabaya, which offered a six-year program for girls from age six. The curriculum comprised a similar selection of Islamic sciences to the first six years of education for boys. The "general sciences" of the boys' curriculum were replaced, however, by the following range of subjects: six years of drawing, handicrafts and needlework (weaving, crochet, cross-

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[52] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 121-2.

[53] R. B. Serjeant, "Historians and Historiography of Hadramawt," reprinted in his *Studies in Arabian History and Civilisation* (London: Valiorum Reprints, 1981), p. 250; Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah*, p. 127.

[54] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, pp. 10-11.

[55] "Alirsjad Banjoewangi," *Al-Jaum*, September 2, 1931, p. 3.

[56] Interview with Abdullah al-Ansari, Jakarta, January 16, 1994.

[57] "Bushrā li'l-sayyidāt," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-April 1929, pp. 12-13.

[58] Ibid.

stitch, embroidery, knitting, sewing children's clothes, making flowers from paper, cloth and silk); and three years' education in housekeeping (cleaning, cooking, washing clothes, darning and mending, running a cash book, and ironing).[59]

In summary, it can be said that al-Irshad education was a compromise between two distinct and independent education systems. From the traditional Hadrami education system, it retained an emphasis on Islamic sciences and moral training as the basis of all education. At the same time, however, a spirit of rational and independent inquiry was applied to these studies which was borrowed from the western education system via the Egyptian modernists. Similarly the study of non-religious sciences and languages was adopted, in an attempt to ensure that graduates were able to support themselves as traders in the modern colony. In all subjects, insistence on Arabic as the language of instruction helped to ensure that the Hadrami students remained aware of their distinctive cultural identity. The fact that the education system was oriented towards the Middle East, combined with elements of a more specifically "Hadrami" patriotism discussed below, provided further impetus to the growth of "Hadrami-ness" among al-Irshad students.

SCHOOL LIFE: LEARNING TO BE MODERN

Although the formal curriculum at al-Irshad schools differed from that of traditional schools, the more fundamental, though less tangible, gulf which separated them was cultural. In the Indies and in Hadramawt, traditional Islamic schools served as a bulwark against Western influence. Clifford Geertz has described the traditional Islamic school in Java as a center of hatred for the infidel colonial government, observing that "vaccination, radios, puppet shows, boy-scouts, ballroom dancing, *gamelan* music, and neckties" had all been condemned by traditional Javanese Islamic scholars due to their association with the Dutch colonial government.[60] In contrast, the al-Irshad schools embraced what may best be described as the spirit of modernity. Through a variety of direct and indirect means they actively promoted ideas and customs of the modern west, including some of the items on Geertz's list: neckties, vaccinations, and boy scouts. As we shall see, one of the other modern values which they deliberately inculcated was patriotism.

In order to understand this aspect of the al-Irshad schools, we must go beyond matters of curriculum and educational philosophy, and consider how the students would have experienced al-Irshad education. For al-Irshad students, the school year began in the Islamic month of Shawwāl and ended in Sha'bān, with the intervening fasting month of Ramaḍān providing the long annual break. The first thing that a new student would have noticed, as he entered the school, was that this was a large and impressive building. The al-Irshad school in Batavia, for example, was described in 1924 by the Tunisian journalist Muḥammad al-Hāshimī as:

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[59] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, pp. 14-27.

[60] Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2 (1959-60): 237-43. Although Geertz's accuracy in including certain items on this list is probably dubious, his general point appears valid.

> a spacious palace surrounded by a garden covering an area of several thousand square meters, lit by electricity through numerous lanterns, with pure water flowing through pipes. It has a private doctor who attends to the students every week even if it is not necessary.[61]

His description mirrored al-Irshad's advertising for the school, which stressed the modern technology it offered (electricity, running water) over the subjects which could be studied there.[62] It is fitting that when, due to Sūrkatī's poor health, the school was moved temporarily to Lawang in East Java, it operated out of a former Dutch hotel, which must have been a modern building indeed.[63] Although not all schools would have been as grand as this, they were similarly modern. The Surabaya school was described by Harold Ingrams in 1939 as "a large airy clean school,"[64] while the Banyuwangi school building which was opened in 1931 was reported to be a modern building to which there was no rival elsewhere in the town.[65]

Photographs of the interiors of the Batavia and Surabaya schools confirm this image of modernity. The classrooms were fitted out with desks, blackboards, electric lights, globes, and maps and pictures on the walls.[66] In case the point had been missed, senior students at the Surabaya school learned to converse on the subject of "the benefits of electric light."[67] None of these trappings would have been found in a traditional Hadrami school. Indeed, as late as 1945, Harold Ingrams observed that most schools in Hadramawt lacked even such basic facilities as desks, while "to a large extent chalk and pieces of kerosene boxes painted black take the place of pencils and exercise books."[68]

For a student in Batavia or Surabaya, at least, entering an al-Irshad school involved a complete break with his previous life. Pupils were encouraged to board at the school. Boarding schools were preferred over day schools wherever possible, because they ensured control over the student's learning environment. In the case of Batavia, students were only permitted to see visitors, even their parents, between the hours of eight and ten on Friday morning and five and seven on Sunday evening. To have visitors at other times, it was thought, would distract them from their studies.[69]

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[61] "Madrasah al-Irshād," *Būrūbūdūr*, September 14, 1924, p. 2. The school had not always been housed in such a luxurious building. In 1920 Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī, then a pupil at the Batavia school, wrote to the al-Irshad newspaper of his fear that the school building was on the verge of collapse. "Shakwā," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 4.

[62] "Madrasah al-Irshād," *Būrūbūdūr*, July 5, 1924.

[63] *Lembaga Baroe*, February 28, 1929.

[64] W. H. Ingrams, "Report on a Tour to Malaya, Java and Hyderabad," R/20/C/1066, IOL, p. 114.

[65] "Al-Irshād far' Bānyūwāngī," *Al-Mishkāh*, September 16, 1931, pp. 2-3; and "Alirsjad Banjoewangi," *Al-Jaum*, September 2, 1931, p. 3.

[66] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean, passim*; and *Boekoe Peratoeran Peladjaran-Peladjaran dalam Internaat Al-Irsjad School* (Batavia: Drukkerij Boro-Budur, n.d.), *passim*. This pamphlet contains Arabic and Malay sections. The Arabic section is cited here unless otherwise specified.

[67] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 19.

[68] Ingrams, "Education in the Hadhramaut," p. 596.

[69] *Boekoe Peratoeran*, p. 6.

For the boarding students, the dormitories were just as modern, and perhaps as novel, as the rest of the school facilities. The regulations of the Batavia school required that parents provide a bed for their child, who may never have slept in one before, and a cupboard in which to store his possessions.[70] Likewise in Surabaya, Ingrams reported that the school boasted "dormitories of five beds each fitted with sheets and pillows and mosquito nets."[71] As well as acquainting himself with these impressive surroundings, the new student had to grow accustomed to modern, western-style clothing. The 1920 regulations of the Batavia school stipulated that parents must equip their child with "sufficient clothing . . . and the necessary shoes."[72] Photographs reveal that required dress in this and other al-Irshad schools was a white shirt with shorts or trousers, shoes, and socks. Some students even sported bow ties.[73]

Despite his discomfort in these perhaps unfamiliar clothes, the new student would have been prevented from squirming in his seat by the awe he felt towards his teacher. This would have been particularly the case if he was taught by Aḥmad Sūrkatī or 'Umar bin Sālim Hubayṣ, the two outstanding teachers of the association. Sūrkatī was, of course, the founder of the first al-Irshad school, while Hubayṣ was one of his early students, who became the principal of the Surabaya school in 1923.[74] Both men have been described by their students as charismatic figures, men of authority who were strict disciplinarians. The oldest son of 'Umar Hubayṣ, 'Abdullāh, recalled that his father always treated him as "a head teacher, not a father," never hesitated to punish him with a strap, and insisted that he live in the dormitory with the other boys, coming home only on Thursdays and Fridays. "He controlled al-Irshad with his spirit. That was the secret of his success."[75] Similarly, Hi. Abd. Halim described the strong impression which Sūrkatī made on students as soon as he entered a classroom: "proud and respected and with authority."[76] Hussein Badjerei recalled the nervousness of Sūrkatī's students as they lined up before class to have the cleanliness of their hands checked.[77] At the same time, however, students remember the close attention Sūrkatī paid to the progress of each one. To take one example, Sūrkatī requested that Abd. Halim move into the dormitory during the school holidays before he began school. Every morning he would take the new student walking in the streets of Batavia, teaching him Arabic from the everyday objects which they passed, so that he could begin classes at a more advanced level.[78]

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ingrams, "Report on a Tour to Malaya, Java and Hyderabad," p. 114.

[72] *Boekoe Peratoeran*, p. 5.

[73] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean, passim*; and *Boekoe Peratoeran, passim.*

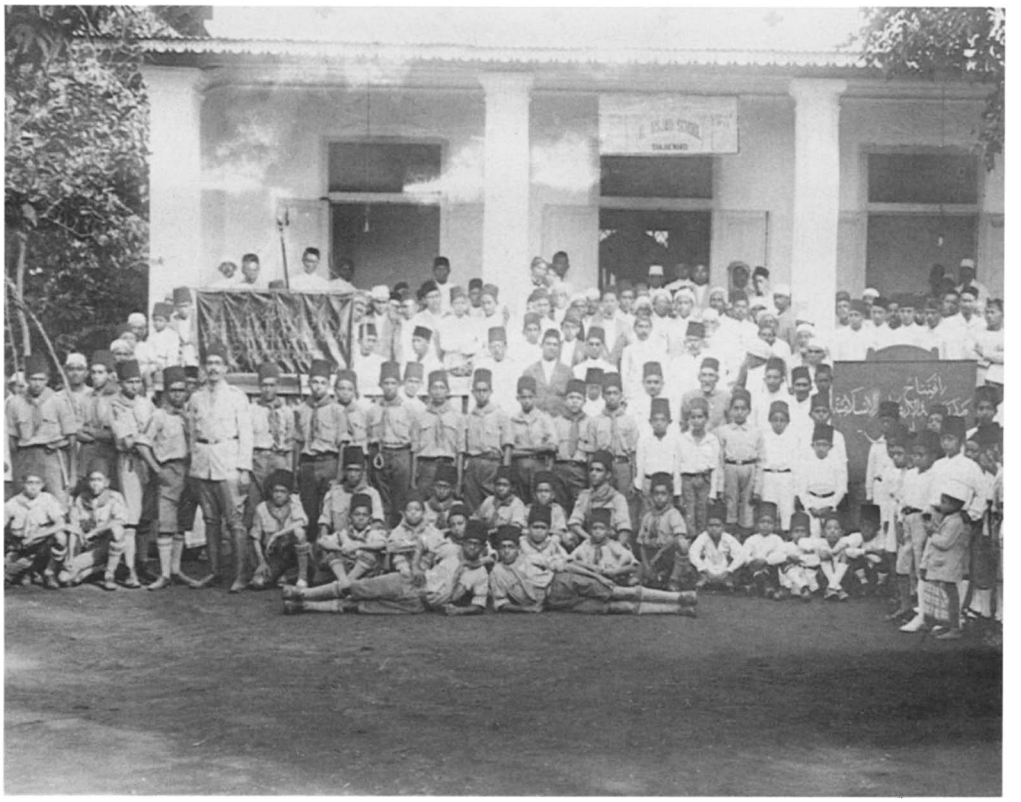
[74] On Hubayṣ, see Ahmad Mahfudz, "Al-Ustadz Umar Hubeis: Ulama dan Pejuang Islam Indonesia," *Khazanah* 1 (May/July 1990): 25-31. He was the brother of 'Alī Hubayṣ, whose background was described in the previous chapter.

[75] Interview with Abdullah Hubeis, Surabaya, January 26, 1994.

[76] Hi. Abd. Halim, "Kesan dan Kenangan bersama Guru Besar Syeikh Ahmad Soorkattiy," *Suara Al-Irsyad* 10,2/5 (October 1980): 14.

[77] Interview with Hussein Badjerei, Jakarta, January 18, 1994.

[78] Halim, "Kesan dan Kenangan," p. 13.



Opening of the al-Irshad school in Banyuwangi, East Java, July 10, 1927
(Photograph provided by Hussein Badjerei)

In order to "create discipline in our children,"[79] al-Irshad promoted a western-inspired scouting movement. Most schools had scout troops which wore the typical scout uniform of khaki shirt and shorts with a bandanna. An al-Irshad scout participated in the same kind of activities as scouts in Europe. The al-Irshad scout troop in Pamekasan, for example—which had the distinction of being the first scouting unit on the island of Madura—spent its first few months learning to signal with flags, torches, fire, smoke, drum beating, and mirrors using Morse code.[80] Other scout activities included excursions, camping, sports, and charity work. Music

[79] Hoofd Bestuur Vereeniging Al-Islah Wal-Irsjad Al-Arabijah, *Sikep dan Toedjoean*, p. 8 (Malay section).

[80] "Irshād Famākasān," *Al-Ma'ārif*, October 6, 1927, p. 4.

also formed part of scout activities, with the larger troops boasting pipe-and-drum bands. In 1931 the Surabaya scout troop presented to the public a musical drama set in the time of the Caliph 'Umar.[81] Theater was yet another activity which would have been frowned upon in traditional Hadrami schools.

Apart from coping with modern facilities, western clothing, and novel activities, the al-Irshad student was confronted with new ideas about health. The schools actively promoted modern, western medicine within the Hadrami community. As noted in the quote above, the Batavia school employed a private doctor who examined the students on a weekly basis. The school regulations even required parents to give prior consent for their child to be hospitalized, should Sūrkatī deem it necessary.[82] In a similar vein the Surabaya school arranged for a government doctor to examine the health of students regularly.[83] In this way students were introduced to the ideas of western medicine at an early age. The lesson was reinforced within the formal school curriculum, where health was a subject studied at all levels.[84] The schools also gave priority to matters of personal hygiene and cleanliness. We noted above that students at the Batavia school were lined up before class to have the cleanliness of their hands checked, for example.[85] Sport was another way in which health was promoted. Students were encouraged to participate in such sports as soccer and "Swedish movements," presumably some kind of gymnastics.[86]

But perhaps the most important of all the modern values which the al-Irshad schools instilled in their students was the spirit of patriotism. The evidence available on this point is scant, for the school curriculum does not mention the teaching of *waṭanīyyah*. Nevertheless there are grounds for concluding that students were taught that love for his homeland was an essential characteristic of a modern man. First, there is the recollection of Abdurrahman Baswedan, a former al-Irshad student, who wrote in 1937:

> Then when we were at school, the teachers taught us the words *tanah air, waton, negri, bilaad*![87] Indeed we were taught seriously, together with education to love our homeland! And in order that our feeling of love for the homeland would be strong, we were taught poems which contained a call to love and defend our *tanah air* and *waton*! How our feelings were inflamed, my brothers, when we read those poems, especially when we sang them with pride and happiness.[88]

For a guide to the nature of these patriotic poems, we may turn to a second piece of evidence, a play written by Hoesin Bafagieh in 1937 which portrayed an al-

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[81] "Kishāfah al-Irshād Sūrābāyā," *Al-Mishkāh*, November 1, 1931, p. 3.

[82] *Boekoe Peratoeran*, p. 5.

[83] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 9.

[84] *Boekoe Peratoeran*, pp. 2-3; cf. Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 23.

[85] Al-Irshad publications were used to reinforce this message. Articles stressing the importance of health and cleanliness were not uncommon. See, for example, "Al-Niẓāfah wa fawā'iduhā al-ṣiḥḥīyyah," *Al-Irshād*, April 7, 1921, p. 3.

[86] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia*, p. 16.

[87] These are Arabic and Malay terms which mean homeland or country.

[88] "Pidato Ketoea Pengoeroes Besar PAI," *Insaf*, October 1937, p. 153.

Irshad school. The teacher in the play leads his students in singing a patriotic song entitled "Hadramawt O My Country," with the following lyrics:

> Hadramawt O my country
> You are the symbol of splendor
> Whoever may come to you with ambition [of conquest]
> He will meet his death.[89]

Bafagih did not attend an al-Irshad school and his play portrayed the association in a negative light, for reasons which will be discussed in chapter seven. Nevertheless, his Irshadi critics did not object to this depiction of the school, but rather to the dialogue which follows it, in which the teacher denies that Hadramawt is the homeland of the *muwallads*. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that this is a fairly accurate depiction of the teaching of Hadrami patriotism in an al-Irshad school. This assumption is reinforced by the fact that, from 1920 onwards, al-Irshad students were prominent among those who contributed patriotic articles to the Arabic press in the Indies.[90] The use of patriotic songs, so common to modern nationalism, would again have been unheard of in a traditional Hadrami institution.

After living in this intensive environment of classes, scouting, sports, and patriotism for many months, the approach of the school holidays must have been greeted by students with a sigh of relief. But the end of the school year was marked by yet another event alien to traditional schooling, a period of examinations which determined whether students would be promoted to the next class. These examinations were public occasions which formed the most important event in the school year. By means of advertisements placed in the Arabic papers, parents in particular and the community in general were invited to see "the fruits which their children have reaped" during the past year.[91] The examinations were mainly oral. In the examinations at the Batavia school in 1921, for example, a student of Islamic doctrine was required to provide logical proofs for the existence of God. Other questions followed from such fields as religious duties, geometry, and the geography of Java.[92] Following the examinations, it was customary for advanced students to present speeches to the audience. At the 1925 examinations in Cirebon, students addressed the audience on such topics as "morality," "progress and advancement," "the benefits of knowledge and the existence of schools," "unity," and "following the commands of God and His messenger."[93] Apart from their pedagogic purpose, the examinations served to promote the achievements of the schools. Indeed, some critics claimed that the examinations were merely an exercise in public relations, and that the students were drilled in their answers

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[89] H. Bafagih, *Tooneel Tjerita "Fatimah" dalam 8 Bedrijf* (Surabaya: n.p., 1938), p. 30.

[90] One example was cited at the end of chapter two. See "Wājibāt al-waṭan," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 1.

[91] "Al-Ikhtibār al-sanawī li-madrasah al-Irshād Sūrābāyā," *Al-Miṣbāḥ*, January 1929, p. 43.

[92] "Ākhir yawm fi'l-imtiḥān," *Al-Irshād*, April 28, 1921, pp. 1-2. Compare the description of examinations held at the Surabaya school in the same year in "Al-Iḥtifāl bi-ikhtitām al-sanah al-madrasīyyah fī madrasah al-Irshād bi- Sūrābāya," *Al-Irshād*, May 5, 1921, p. 1.

[93] "Shiribūn," *Būrūbūdūr*, March 17, 1925, p. 3.

beforehand.[94] The examinations culminated with a ceremony in which scout troops often provided a musical performance, and certificates and prizes were awarded to the successful students. This custom of prize-giving, clearly of western inspiration, originated in the first al-Irshad school as early as 1915.[95]

In summary, the experiences which the al-Irshad schools offered their students were extraordinary. Through its schools, al-Irshad attempted to combine a purified and reformed Islam with those elements of modern, western culture which it viewed as useful for the progress of the Hadramis. The schools strove to be more Islamic, more Hadrami, and more modern than traditional educational institutions. The student at an al-Irshad school did not merely study new subjects; he also participated in new experiences unknown to the student of a traditional Hadrami school. He dressed in a shirt, trousers, shoes and socks, and sometimes a tie. He sat at a desk and took down his lessons from a blackboard. He studied the location of his country on a map and on a world globe. He endured public examinations. He joined a scout troop, wore a scout uniform, and possibly marched in a pipe-and-drum band. He played soccer. He may have performed in a school play. If he was sick, he was examined by a western-trained medical doctor. And he sang patriotic songs about his homeland. All of these experiences were quintessentially modern experiences, probably alien even to his father. Whatever else he learned at school, the al-Irshad student learned how it felt to be a modern Hadrami.

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[94] See the criticism by Abdurrahman Baswedan, a former al-Irshad student, in Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), pp. 365-8.

[95] Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, p. 1; and "Ḥaflaḥ al-ikhtibār fi far' al-Irshād bi-Famākasān," *Al-Dahnā'*, February 1929, pp. 4-8.

CHAPTER FIVE

COMPETING VISIONS OF HADRAMI-NESS: THE 'ALAWI-IRSHADI CONFLICT

The al-Irshad organization, in my view, is no pure Arab organization. There is too much African blood among its members for that.[1]

The 'Alawi came [to Hadramawt] as lions in sheep's clothing and wolves in the form of lambs.[2]

Waṭanīyyah, the belief that the Hadramis came from one homeland and owed their primary allegiance to that homeland, was an important component of the Hadrami awakening. Promoted initially through the Arabic press in the Indies and reinforced by the operation of Hadrami organizations and schools, the notion of a Hadrami identity centered on the homeland had become widely accepted by the 1920s. The content of Hadrami identity, however—the understanding of what it meant to be Hadrami, and who was or was not entitled to that ascription—remained contested.

At the center of this contest was the Hadrami system of social stratification, and, in particular, the traditional status of the *sayyids*. In the first decade of the twentieth century, tension was building among prosperous non-*sayyids* for whom customary deferential behavior towards *sayyids* had become increasingly galling. In 1913 Aḥmad Sūrkatī lent the weight of his learning to the side of the non-*sayyids* in a *fatwā* which declared, contrary to long-standing custom in Hadramawt, that there was no legal obstacle to marriage between the daughter of a *sayyid* and a non-*sayyid* man. At this stage conflict could no longer be contained; as we have seen, the ensuing hostilities resulted in a split within Jam'īyyah Khayr and the subsequent formation of al-Irshad. The conflict did not end there. On the contrary, the split merely gave institutionalized form to a debate which was to rage among the Hadramis for two decades, and which was labeled, after

[1] Address by Sayyid Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, *Handelingen van den Volksraad*, July 17, 1932.

[2] "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fikrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, January 1928, p. 2.

the two parties involved, the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict.[3] The debate focused on three main areas of Hadrami custom: the kissing of *sayyids'* hands, the ban on marriage between a *sayyid*'s daughter and a non-*sayyid*, and, from the early 1930s, the use of the title *"sayyid"* itself.[4]

To challenge customary deferential behavior was not unusual in the Indies—or indeed elsewhere in Southeast Asia—at this time. Leaders of the mass organization Sarekat Islam, for example, spearheaded an active campaign against traditional Javanese practices such as the use of noble titles, and squatting and prostrations in ritual obeisance to the Javanese ruling elite, the upper *priyayi*.[5] Similarly, members of the Dobama movement in Burma adopted the title "thakin" (lord or master) to symbolize their equality with their traditional superiors.[6] What is interesting in the Hadrami case is the intersection between the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict and the broader issue of community identity. The debate over the *sayyids* was increasingly expressed in terms of Hadrami-ness: in other words, each side came to defend its position as *more Hadrami* than the other. To the *sayyids*, the stratification system encapsulated the essence of Hadrami identity. Traditions of the homeland, but above all stratification, must be maintained as an integral part of Hadrami society; abandoning them would be tantamount to a betrayal of Hadrami-ness. For the Irshadis, on the other hand, tradition was "on trial."[7] Seeking to forge a Hadrami identity which was consistent with the demands of the modern world, they developed a critique of the *sayyids* as non-Hadrami "intruders" who had imposed stratification on Hadrami society. By defending their movement as a return to the "golden days" before the coming of the *sayyids*, they sought to show that they could be modern without losing their Hadrami identity.

STATUS OF THE *SAYYIDS*: THE IRSHADI VIEW

It was sometimes claimed by contemporary Hadrami writers that two incidents caused the 'Alawi-Irshadi dispute: the refusal by 'Umar Manqūsh to kiss the hand of Sayyid 'Umar bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās, and Aḥmad Sūrkatī's *fatwā* in defense of a

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[3] 'Alawi is a collective term for the Hadrami *sayyids*.

[4] A wide range of other issues were raised during the course of the conflict. For example, Knysh has argued that in Hadramawt itself the veneration of saints was a crucial issue for modern reformers, and the same question certainly featured in the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict in the Indies. Nevertheless I consider these issues to have been of secondary importance. Alexander Knysh, "The Cult of Saints and Religious Reformism in Hadramawt" in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 199, 216; and Alexander Knysh, "The Cult of Saints in Hadramawt: An Overview," *New Arabian Studies* 1 (1993): 145-7.

[5] A. P. E. Korver, *Sarekat Islam 1912-1916: Opkomst, Bloei en Structuur van Indonesie's Eerste Massabeweging* (Amsterdam: Historische Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982), pp. 51-4. Another example is the Djawa Dipa movement, which fought against the use of hierarchical levels in the Javanese language. Haji Agus Salim, a Sarekat Islam leader, identified al-Irshad's position with the worldwide struggle of democracy against aristocracy. Hussein Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad* (Jakarta: n.p., 1985), p. 14.

[6] Khin Yi, *The Dobama Movement in Burma (1930-1938)* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1988), p. 3.

[7] This phrase is borrowed from David Marr, *Vietnamese Tradition on Trial, 1920-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

marriage between the daughter of a *sayyid* and a non-*sayyid*.[8] Although this analysis highlights precipitating factors rather than underlying causes, it is nevertheless useful in that it highlights two key issues of the early years of the conflict. These were the custom of kissing the hands of *sayyids*, and the traditional Hadrami marriage restrictions. The former issue was the less important, and can be dealt with summarily here. In response to the well-publicized Manqūsh incident, the prominent Batavian Sayyid 'Uthmān Bin Yaḥyā issued a *fatwā* in which he stated that Islamic law did *not* oblige non-*sayyids* to kiss the hands of *sayyids*.[9] This authoritative statement from one of their own fatally weakened the *sayyid* position. Although incidents of *sayyid* outrage at failure by non-*sayyids* to kiss their hands continued to be reported for some years (particularly, it should be added, by pro-Irshadi newspapers),[10] many *sayyids* did not attempt to mount a defense of the hand-kiss and appear to have been willing to acknowledge defeat on this issue. Indeed, in 1931 a brochure published by a *sayyid* committee, which was otherwise vehemently opposed to the Irshadis, tacitly supported the al-Irshad position on this custom by acknowledging:

> As for the matter of the hand-kiss . . . we ourselves would like to join in cursing the hands which, just because they are not kissed, take up a pen to pour scorn on those who don't want to kiss their hands.[11]

The dispute over marriage restrictions, on the other hand, proved more intractable. A convenient place to begin our analysis is *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb* (The Form of the Answer), the pamphlet written by Sūrkatī in 1915 in response to a request made by the editor of the Malay newspaper *Soeloeh Hindia* to justify his *fatwā*.[12] Sūrkatī opens by stating the Islamic law of marriage as he understands it. In principle he compares marriage to a contract of sale or hire: provided that the price is laid down (whether sale price, hire fee, or dowry) and both parties have agreed, the contract is valid. A valid marriage requires the agreement of the woman and her closest guardian or guardians. She must marry a Muslim. The dowry

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[8] Such an account can be found, with minor variations, in "Ḥawl al-Ḥaḍāramah wa nahḍatihim (3)," *Al-Dahnā'*, May 1928, p. 3; "Tarich 'Al-Irsjad': Voordracht Toean Oemar Hobeis Dalam Congres 'Al-Irsjad' Batavia," *Gerakan Al-Irsjad* (Batavia: n.p., 1931), pp. 92-4; and "Al-Ṣulḥ khayr," *Al-Irshād*, July 1933, pp. 14-15.

[9] "Al-Ṣulḥ khayr," *Al-Irshād*, July 1933, p. 15; and B. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur," *Overdruk uit de Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 58 (1920): 191. The *fatwā* was published as *Al-Qandīl fī ḥukm al-taqbīl*.

[10] See for example "Al-Muqāṭa'ah li-ajli al-shammah," *Al-Irshād*, September 30, 1920, p. 2; and "Al-Muqāṭa'ah li-ajli al-shammah," *Al-Irshād*, November 4, 1920, p. 4.

[11] Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq atau Keterangan yang Benar* (Batavia: n.p., c. 1931), p. 9.

[12] Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb* (Surabaya: al-Maṭba'ah al-Islāmīyyah, 1915). The pamphlet is reprinted in full in Ṣalāḥ 'Abd al-Qādir Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā Al-Bābī Al-Ḥalabī, 1956), vol. 2, pp. 262-72. This was not the first round in the dispute, for Sūrkatī refers to the "fire of fanaticism" which was already blazing among the Hadramis, but it is an appropriate starting point. For one thing, it is the oldest extant statement of the Irshadi position; for another, the pamphlet remained a point of reference for many years. Apart from the Arabic original, which was widely distributed, the pamphlet was also translated into Malay and published in serial form in a pro-Irshadi newspaper in the mid-1920s (see *Al-Wivac*, September 15, 1925, pp. 5-6 and subsequent issues).

must be agreed upon, offered, and accepted before two witnesses. Once these conditions are met the marriage is valid. This is the law as agreed by the founders of all four Sunni law schools, he claims, and it is based on the justice of Islam and the equality of all Muslims.[13]

Sūrkatī continues the theme of equality for several pages, citing the *Qur'an* to demonstrate that Islam recognizes no descent group as superior to any other. "The believers are but a single brotherhood,"[14] he quotes, as well as the following:

> O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.[15]

No man is superior to any other by virtue of his blood, Sūrkatī argues, for superiority is based only on knowledge, action, and good character.[16] Just as a good tree can produce bad fruit, so too a good man can produce a bad son. Hence a man should be judged by his own worth, not by the situation of his birth. After all, he adds, if virtue was the result of descent from a prophet then we should all be virtuous, for all humanity is descended from the prophets Adam and Noah.[17]

Having established the principle of equality, Sūrkatī turns to the question of *kafā'ah* (equivalence). We have seen that the marriage restrictions in Hadramawt were based on this principle of Islamic law, which states that a woman's partner should be no less than her social equivalent. The traditional Hadrami interpretation of *kafā'ah* held that equivalence was based on descent, and that a woman was barred from marrying a man from a lower descent group. Hence the daughter of a *sayyid* may only marry a *sayyid*.[18] Sūrkatī rejects this interpretation, arguing that *kafā'ah* refers only to the means for ensuring a good relationship and agreement between the two partners. For example, if the daughter of a rich man, who is used to living a life of luxury, marries a poor man, then her reduced standard of living may lead to disagreements and hatred of her husband. The same would be the case with an educated women who married an ignorant man, or a well-bred woman with a coarse man. For the sake of domestic harmony, it is better that she marries her equivalent. Nevertheless, he adds, the choice remains with the woman: she may decide that what her prospective partner lacks in wealth or learning is compensated by his strength, youth,

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[13] Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*, pp. 5-8.

[14] *Qur'an* 49:10. All translations from the *Qur'an* are based on Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* (Brentwood: Amana Corporation, 1993).

[15] *Qur'an* 49:13.

[16] Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*, p. 10.

[17] Ibid., p. 14.

[18] Farhat J. Ziadeh, "Equality (*Kafa'ah*) in the Muslim Law of Marriage," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 6 (1957): 515-16. One early twentieth-century Hadrami scholar argued that there were four "ranks" of descent: (1) descendants of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭimah, who included the Hadrami *sayyids*; (2) other members of the Prophet's lineage (Hashimites); (3) members of the Prophet's tribe (Quraysh); (4) other Arabs. Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, p. 244; and A. S. Bujra, "Political Conflict and Stratification in Hadramaut(I)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 3,4 (July 1967): 357.

handsomeness, "or other such qualities which please women."[19] Finally, Sūrkatī reinforces his argument by citing examples of marriages performed by the Prophet where the woman's descent was superior to that of the man.[20]

In *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb* Sūrkatī is using a rationalistic and modernistic approach to the application of Islamic law.[21] At no point does he cite the opinions of previous Islamic scholars. Instead, he constructs a rational argument which he supports by quoting directly from the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth*. Sūrkatī defends this approach early in the pamphlet, when he argues that:

> what the Prophet brought, what He did, what He commanded and what He established are the religion, and nothing else [is]. All appeal and all recourse are to that.[22]

In this respect Sūrkatī is clearly heeding the call of Muḥammad 'Abduh to "return to the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth*." But it is worth noting that the traditional Hadrami interpretation of *kafā'ah* could also be challenged on the grounds of orthodox Islamic scholarship. Ziadeh has demonstrated the range of interpretations of *kafā'ah* which have been applied by different scholars, noting that the Hadrami version can be considered extreme and is not shared by other Muslims.[23] According to Snouck Hurgronje, defense for the Hadrami position could not be found within the canon of orthodox Shāfi`ī scholarship, the school to which the Hadramis otherwise adhered.[24] At the same time, the verdict according to the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth* is not entirely clear-cut: "*kafā'ah* can be supported as well as negated by quoting from the mass of contradictory traditions."[25] In other words, a modernist approach to Islamic law did not necessarily entail rejection of the Hadrami interpretation of *kafā'ah*, and a traditional approach did not necessarily entail its support. Attitudes towards *kafā'ah* were determined, for the most part, by self-interest rather than scholarship.

STATUS OF THE *SAYYIDS*: THE 'ALAWI VIEW

The publication of Sūrkatī's pamphlet provoked a heated reaction within the Hadrami *sayyid* community.[26] Its appearance was reported to be the cause of riots

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[19] Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*, pp. 17-19.

[20] Ibid., pp. 20-3.

[21] Hoesein Djajadiningrat, "Nota nopens de brochure van Ahmad bin Moehammad Soerkati al-Ansari, getitled 'Soeratoe'l-djawab'," Hazeu Collection, KITLV.

[22] Sūrkatī, *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*, p. 6.

[23] Ziadeh, "Equality (*Kafa'ah*)," p. 515.

[24] C. Snouck Hurgronje, "Sajjid Oethman's Gids voor de Priesterraden," *Het Recht in Nederlandsch-Indie* 63 (1894): 722-44. This article is reprinted in *Verspreide Geschriften van C. Snouck Hurgronje* (Bonn and Leipzig: Kurt Schroeder, 1924) 4,1, pp. 283-303.

[25] Ziadeh, "Equality (*Kafa'ah*)," p. 508.

[26] Of course, as we noted in chapter three, there were *sayyids* who supported the al-Irshad movement, especially in its early years. Nevertheless their number was small, and *sayyids* who spoke out in favor of al-Irshad tended to be regarded by their kinsmen as traitors. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," p. 236; and "Li-kulli bad' jawāb," *Al-Irshād*, July 29, 1920, p. 3.

among Hadramis in Batavia, although details of these riots are obscure.[27] Refutations of the pamphlet began to circulate soon after its publication. It is important to note that, while some *sayyids* responded by calling on traditional values,[28] many of those who spoke out against Sūrkatī were "men of the *nahḍah*," just as concerned with modern education and the "progress" of the Hadramis as the Irshadis were. For example, among the most outspoken were Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Muḥammad Ṣadaqah Daḥlān, Sūrkatī's successor as head of the Jam'īyyah Khayr schools; Sayyid 'Alī bin Aḥmad Bin Shahāb, a founder and former chairman of Jam'īyyah Khayr; Sayyid Muḥammad bin 'Aqīl Bin Yaḥyā, an important force behind the region's first Islamic reformist magazine *Al-Imam* and founder of a modern-style Arab school in Singapore; and Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim, the former editor of *Al-Bashīr* and a prominent modernist thinker.[29] These men were reformists in the sense that they favored reform of the community's educational institutions and the spread of modern-style education; and they were also supporters of Islamic modernism in that they promoted, to varying degrees, a freer and more rationalistic approach to Islam, which returned to the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth* as the primary sources of Islamic law and gave less emphasis to the formulations of later Muslim jurists.

The response of such men to Sūrkatī's pamphlet is found in a booklet written by 'Abdullāh Daḥlān in 1917 and entitled *Irsāl al-Shihāb 'alā Ṣūrah al-Jawāb* (Sending fire down upon *Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*). This is essentially a modernist-style defense of the status of *sayyids* in the Islamic community.[30] From the outset Daḥlān stresses that his pamphlet is based on the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth*, which Sūrkatī had described as his own "recourse and appeal"; and he asks rhetorically, "will the Negro [now] return from his error or persist in his stubbornness?"[31] Of course, in Daḥlān's hands the same sources yield very different results. Whereas Sūrkatī based his argument of the principle of *musāwah* or equality, Daḥlān stresses *tafāḍul* (precedence or superiority): he argues that God has privileged some people over others, and that it is the duty of every believer to accept the lot which God has ordained for him. To support this view he quotes several verses from the *Qur'an*, including the following: "And in nowise covet those things in which Allah hath bestowed his gifts more freely on some of you than on others"[32]; and "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more than the other."[33]

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[27] Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," pp. 191-3.

[28] Ibid., pp. 192-3.

[29] "Al-Bashīr min Batāwī," *Al-Bashīr*, December 18, 1914, p. 3; H. Aboebakar, *Sedjarah Hidup K. H. A. Wahid Hasjim dan Karangan Tersiar* (Jakarta: Panitya Buku Peringatan Alm K. H. A. Wahid Hasjim, 1957), p. 229; Abu Bakar Hamzah, *Al-Imam: Its Role in Malay Society 1906-1908* (Kuala Lumpur: Media Cendiakawan, 1981), pp. 123-4; and Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," pp. 192 and 203.

[30] Due to the unavailability of this booklet, the following discussion relies upon the summary contained in Bisri Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati: Pemikiran Pembaharuan dan Pemurnian Islam dalam Masyarakat Arab Hadrami di Indonesia," (PhD dissertation, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, 1991), pp. 160-72.

[31] Ibid., pp. 160 and 167. "The Negro" is a reference to Sūrkatī. Daḥlān's use of such emotive language is discussed below.

[32] *Qur'an* 4:32.

[33] *Qur'an* 4:34. Yusuf Ali interpolates "strength" following the word "more" in his translation, but this reading is questionable.

Daḥlān goes on to assert that the group which God has favored above all is *ahlu'l-bayt*: literally, the People of the House, a term which he understands to include the Prophet's daughter Fāṭimah, her husband 'Alī, their two sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and all of their descendants. He quotes again from the *Qur'an*: "Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye Members of the Family, and to make you pure and spotless."[34] Many *ḥadīth* could, he claims, be cited to support this view of the superiority of the descendants of the Prophet. According to one, the Prophet was together with his grandchildren when the verse cited above was revealed. Muḥammad thereupon embraced them, saying, "O God, these two are my family, so remove all abomination from them and make them pure and spotless."[35] Another *ḥadīth*, of which several variants are reported, cites the Prophet saying:

> Verily I leave among you two legacies. The first is the Book of God, the Most High. In it are guidance and illumination, so take hold of the Book of God and adhere to it. And [the second is] my family. By God, I remind you of my family. By God, I remind you of my family. By God, I remind you of my family.[36]

That Islam privileges some believers over others, and that the family of the Prophet is privileged over all, forms the basis of Daḥlān's interpretation of *kafā'ah*, to which he turns at the end of the pamphlet. Here he acknowledges that differences of opinion exist among Islamic scholars regarding the meaning of *kafā'ah*. Setting other differences aside, however, *ḥadīth* can be found to confirm that descent is a legitimate consideration in determining whether a prospective husband is a suitable partner for a woman. For example, the Prophet stated, "I prohibit women of noble descent [from marrying], except to those who are equal."[37] And as for who is equal to whom, another *ḥadīth* asserts that "Verily God chose the Kinānah from the Arabs, and He chose the Quraysh from the Kinānah, and He chose the Hashimites from the Quraysh." In other words, as Daḥlān interprets the *ḥadīth*, the Hashimites (to which Muḥammad belonged) have superior descent to other members of the Quraysh tribe, the descent of the Quraysh is superior to that of others in the Kinānah tribal federation, and the descent of the non-Quraysh Kinānah is still superior to that of other Arabs. If the descendants of the Prophet possess the most noble descent of all, then it follows that the only acceptable husband for the daughter of a *sayyid* is another *sayyid*.

It should go without saying that Daḥlān's pamphlet was countered by other polemicists on the al-Irshad side, who questioned his interpretation of Qur'anic verses and dismissed as weak the *ḥadīth* on which he based his argument.[38] The

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[34] *Qur'an* 33:33.

[35] Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati," pp. 163-4.

[36] Ibid., pp. 164-5. A second variant of this *ḥadīth* reads: "Verily I leave among you that which, if you hold fast to it, will keep you from deviation after I am gone. One, which is greater than the other, is the Book of God, a cord stretched from heaven to earth. The other is my family, the People of the House." The sources for the *ḥadīth* are given in Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi, *60 Hadis Keutamaan Ahlul Bayt* (Malang: Yayasan al-Kautsar, 1993), pp. 34-5.

[37] Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati," p. 169.

[38] Noteworthy among them was Aḥmad al-'Aqīb's *Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī ta'yīd Ṣūrah al-Jawāb*, which responded to Daḥlān's argument in great detail. See Affandi, "Shaykh Ahmad Surkati," pp. 160-72.

ensuing polemics will not detain us. The crucial point to note is that the basic arguments of each side use the methods of Islamic modernism: they rely on the *Qur'an* and *ḥadīth*, and they appeal to reason rather than citing the works of previous Islamic scholars. In other words, the conflict should be viewed as a dispute between competing groups of reformers, not as a conflict between traditionalism and modernism.

COMPETING VISIONS OF HADRAMI-NESS: THE *SAYYIDS* AS INSIDERS

As the debate progressed, it was increasingly fought at an ideological level as well. It is indicative of the importance which their national identity had assumed for the Hadramis that each side came to appeal to Hadrami-ness, rather than Islam, as the ultimate arbiter of their case. That both sides preached loyalty to the homeland is beyond question; they differed, rather, in their vision of who the Hadramis were. In other words, the conflict over the role of the *sayyids* can be viewed as part of a broader struggle to define the borders of Hadrami-ness.

This aspect of the conflict was first seen in the reaction of the *sayyids* to Sūrkatī himself. For many years *sayyid* publications consistently portrayed Sūrkatī as an "intruder" whose teachings were an insult to Hadrami tradition. Such a stance began with Daḥlān's *Irsāl al-Shihāb*, in which the author refused to refer to Sūrkatī by name, describing him instead in ways which stressed his foreignness: "the Sudanese," "the Negro," "the black." He denied that Sūrkatī was an Arab and claimed that he knew no Arabic.[39] From 1918, the Surabaya-based pro-*sayyid* Arabic newspaper *Al-Iqbāl* pursued a similar line of attack. Numerous articles condemned Sūrkatī as an "intruder" who had divided the Hadramis and was the enemy of their homeland.[40] Described as a "black slave," and even as "the black death," his teachings were said to insult and scorn the Hadrami *waṭan*.[41] The same attitude was responsible for the failure of a proposed Arab congress early in 1919. The congress had been organized to discuss various issues of concern to the Hadramis, in particular the harsh restrictions which Dutch colonial authorities had lately placed upon Hadrami immigration to the Indies.[42] Although it

[39] Hazeu to Resident of Batavia, February 28, 1918, mr. 625x/19, MK, ARA; and Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," p. 193.

[40] *De vijand van het vaderland* is Schrieke's rendering. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," p. 199.

[41] Ibid., pp. 199-203.

[42] A secret letter issued by the Head of the Department of Immigration in March 1918 instructed that Arabs from Hadramawt were henceforth to be regarded as "harmful to the economic interests of the Native population," and on these grounds their admission to the country was to be refused. An exception would only be made in the case of an applicant whose family had been settled in the Indies for at least forty years, was of good name and reputation, and was able to provide amply for him. Although the terms of this instruction were never made public, its implementation was quickly felt. News spread that Hadrami migrants were being singled out for discrimination, in contrast to Chinese and even Arabs from other regions. Sayyid Ismā'īl bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās, the Arab representative in the Volksraad (People's Council) which had recently been established by the colonial government, spoke out on the issue in that forum. He also took advantage of the wave of popular discontent to propose that a congress should be held to discuss this and other issues of concern to the Hadramis. Mouw (Head of Immigration), circular dated March 26, 1918, mr. 431x/18, located in vb. June 28, 1919, no. 16, MK, ARA; address by Ismā'īl bin 'Abdullāh al-'Aṭṭās to the Volksraad, Handelingen van den Volksraad, December 9, 1918; "Moepakat Arab," *Neratja*, December 24, 1918; Circular of the Islah

initially supported the congress proposal,[43] *Al-Iqbāl* changed its stance when it learned that Sūrkatī was to be an active participant. Jam'īyyah Khayr, its Surabayan sister organization Jam'īyyah al-Khayrīyyah, and several other pro-*sayyid* organizations announced that they would not be involved with the congress "while the Sudanese Aḥmad Sūrkatī is a member of it," and their boycott caused the virtual failure of the congress.[44] A series of letters to *Al-Iqbāl* makes it clear that Sūrkatī's participation was opposed on the grounds that he was an "intruder." A Hadrami from Solo, although he did not mention Sūrkatī's name, protested against non-Hadramis joining the congress on the grounds that such people "contaminate the character of the organization through their nationality."[45]

Sūrkatī's opponents were presenting an implicit definition of what it meant to belong to the Hadrami *waṭan*. For them, upholding the status of the *sayyids* was an essential part of being Hadrami. Being Hadrami *meant* kissing *sayyids'* hands and upholding marriage restrictions. Sūrkatī was excoriated not just as an enemy of the *sayyids*, nor even as an enemy of Islam, but as an enemy of the Hadrami *waṭan*. The Sudanese scholar did not belong to the Hadrami *waṭan*, and was therefore not qualified to pass judgment on Hadrami traditions.[46] By extension, however, any Hadrami who criticized the status of the *sayyids* was a traitor to his homeland, and ceased to be a pure Hadrami. This conclusion was implicit in such pronouncements as that made in a pamphlet published in 1931: "since the al-Irshad party separated itself from the Hadrami Arab people generally, from that moment too the party has attacked the *sayyids*."[47]

In these criticisms of Sūrkatī, the *sayyids* were presenting themselves as the final judges of Hadrami-ness. Their vision of Hadrami-ness became clearer upon the formation of Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah (The 'Alawi Union) in 1927. Al-Rābiṭah appears to have been an attempt by the *sayyids* to seize back the reform agenda, which had been dominated by al-Irshad since its split from Jam'īyyah Khayr in 1914. Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī linked its establishment, probably correctly, to *sayyid* concern at the success of al-Irshad.[48] According to its constitution, membership in al-Rābiṭah was open to all Arabs, not only the *sayyids*.[49] In practice, however, as its name suggests, the organization was the party of the 'Alawi. Its initial twelve-man executive included only one non-*sayyid*, and the same situation was replicated

committee dated January 23, 1919, Hazeu Collection, KITLV; and al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 274-7.

[43] *Al-Iqbāl*, January 2, 1919, as cited in IPO 1 (1919).

[44] Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, p. 277; *Al-Iqbāl*, February 15, 1919, as cited in IPO 12 (1919); and "Pergerakan Kaoem Arab," *Neratja*, February 10, 1919.

[45] *Al-Iqbāl*, February 15, 1919, as cited in IPO 12 (1919). See also *Al-Iqbāl*, March 1, 1919, as cited in IPO 16 (1919).

[46] "What gives this outsider the right to scorn Hadramawt?" asked one contributor to *Al-Iqbāl*. Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren," p. 200.

[47] Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq*, p. 4.

[48] "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fikrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, January 1928, p. 2.

[49] The constitution can be found in Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), pp. 471-4.

at branch level: out of seventy-one initial office-bearers in the regions, there was one non-*sayyid*.[50]

Al-Rābiṭah literature had a tone which was not dissimilar to that of al-Irshad, for it spoke of reform and progress to be achieved through education. Its first pamphlet, for example, which was circulated in 1927 by a preparatory committee, summarized the goals of the organization as follows:

> Al-Rābiṭah has no aims and no hopes, save whatever will be to the benefit of the country and mankind, building the homeland, encouraging the search for knowledge, helping the scholars and cooperating with the rulers in anything which will bring benefit, advantage, reform, goodness, justice and safety.[51]

Al-Rābiṭah's vision of Hadrami society, however, was distinctive. To these *sayyids*, stratification was the essence of being Hadrami. The same pamphlet makes it clear that the founders of the organization considered the Hadrami people to consist of several classes, each with its own interests.[52] While Al-Rābiṭah committed itself to serving all of these, as well as the general national interest, it intended to maintain the class distinctions. For example, concerning its conduct towards "the people of station and rank" (evidently a reference to the *sayyids*), the founders of Al-Rābiṭah committed the organization "to honor them, respect them, support their position, and confirm their rights over all men." At the same time, the organization would "work hand-in-hand with them in service to the Hadrami people."[53] What this pamphlet suggests is that the *sayyids* saw themselves as custodians of Hadrami tradition, of which their own status was a part. Reform, in their view, should take place under the guidance and leadership of the *sayyids*—just as Muḥammad had guided the Arabs, and as the first *sayyids* in Hadramawt had brought the people to the true path.[54] The *sayyid* vision of their role in guiding the reform process appears to have been enacted in the *sayyid*-dominated "Hadrami Reform Congresses" held in Shiḥr and Singapore in 1927 and 1928, which will be discussed in the following chapter.[55]

COMPETING VISIONS OF HADRAMI-NESS: THE *SAYYIDS* AS OUTSIDERS

There was, however, an underlying contradiction in the *sayyid* vision of their role in Hadrami society. The *sayyids* were, in a sense, newcomers to Hadramawt. The first *sayyids* arrived in Hadramawt in the fourth century after Muḥammad's flight from Mecca to Medina. In a country which had been settled continuously since

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[50] *Al-Rābiṭah*, February 1928, pp. 14 and 29-32.

[51] Al-Hay'ah al-Taḥḍīrīyyah al-Muwaqqatah li'l-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah, *Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah: Maqāṣiduhā wa āmāluhā* (Batavia: n.p., 1927), pp. 6-7.

[52] Ibid., pp. 4-6.

[53] Ibid., p. 4.

[54] On this claim see Comitee Pembela Bangsa Sajid, *Boekti Kebenneran oentoek Oemoem Kaoem Moeslimin* (Batavia: n.p., c. 1932), p. 16; and "Wafd lajnah al-difā' 'an al-sādah al-'Alawiyīn," *Ḥaḍramawt*, August 10, 1931, p. 1.

[55] The most important sources are Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 56-75; R/20/A/3293, IOL; and FO371/13005, PRO.

ancient times—the name Hadramawt appears in the Book of Genesis—this comparatively recent arrival meant that the *sayyids* were vulnerable to having the charge of "intruder" turned back on themselves. A vision of the non-*sayyid* Hadramis as the indigenous inhabitants of Hadramawt, and of the *sayyids* as intruders, developed only gradually within al-Irshad circles. It should be recalled that the first generation of al-Irshad leaders had lived in Hadramawt, and grew up in a society where the authority of the *sayyids* was still paramount. For many of them, the refusal to kiss a *sayyid*'s hand was a break with tradition for which they had, perhaps, to steel themselves. They did not question whether the *sayyids* formed an integral part of Hadrami society; however, they felt that deferential treatment towards the *sayyids* was excessive. They were not opposed to the *sayyids* as a class; after all, they accepted *sayyids* as teachers in their schools.

It was up to the younger generation of al-Irshad leaders to develop a more comprehensive critique of the *sayyid* role in Hadrami society and, at the same time, to expound a new vision of Hadrami-ness. These men were born in the Indies, and from their earliest years at school they had been taught that people should be respected for their deeds and not for their ancestry; that "the hand-kiss is for no-one but our parents."[56] For them, reverence for the *sayyids* was unthinkable. In many cases they had never visited the *waṭan* and witnessed the full extent of *sayyid* authority there. Removed from Hadrami society, they were able to envision it without the all-pervasive influence of the *sayyids*. The work of Paul Dresch on north Yemen is illuminating here. According to Dresch, Yemenis who had worked in other countries in the 1950s and 1960s came to see the *sayyids* of Yemen in a new light, as a distinct social group rather than as holy men attached to certain tribes. "[The *sayyids*] were not any longer only 'our' learned men or 'theirs' but began to seem to many a 'class' whose relevance might be judged by the standards of other countries."[57] A similar process appears to have occurred among the young Irshadi leaders in Java, who were able to view the *sayyids* as a group alien to, and apart from, the Hadrami people. In this way they drew the boundaries of Hadrami-ness ever more tightly around themselves.

Some signs of this more radical stance can be seen as early as 1920. In that year one of the founders of the al-Irshad branch in Cirebon, Shaykh Sālim bin 'Alī Bā 'Isā, characterized the social life of the Hadramis in the following terms: "one group has absolute power and the Hadrami people are accustomed to obeying it."[58] Other contributors to Al-Irshād agreed, arguing that the 'Alawi had subjected the Hadramis to "abuse, enslavement, humiliation, and oppression" since the arrival of the first *sayyids* in Hadramawt.[59] Yet these statements are often ambiguous as to whether the *sayyids* should be considered as part of the Hadrami people.

The more radical vision of the *sayyids* as foreigners was pioneered by Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī, a graduate of the al-Irshad school in Batavia. He is best known for *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt al-Siyāsī* (The Political History of Hadramawt), written in the mid-

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[56] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia: Verslag Tahoenan 1935-1936* (Surabaya: n.p., 1936), p. 14.

[57] Paul Dresch, *Tribes, Government, and History in Yemen* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 248.

[58] "Laylah ams wa ẓulmuhā wa ṣabāḥ al-yawm wa 'adluhu," *Al-Irshād*, October 7, 1920, p. 3.

[59] "Thamarah al-Iqbāl wa natījah kuttābihā," *Al-Irshād*, November 14, 1920, p. 2; and "Natījah al-Iqbāl al-mash'ūmah," *Al-Irshād*, December 6, 1920, p. 3.

1930s when he was living in Cairo. But his views on the *sayyids* were already set in the mid-1920s, when he was a teacher at al-Irshad schools in Java and Madura. In 1928 al-Bakrī wrote a two-part article on the 'Alawi for the pro-Irshadi monthly *Al-Dahnā'*.[60] The traditional view of Hadrami history held that the *sayyids* had brought civilization and Islamic orthodoxy to Hadramawt.[61] Al-Bakrī turned this view on its head, arguing that the *sayyids* had corrupted the pure and innocent Hadramis. Before the coming of the *sayyids*, he wrote, the Hadramis were noble people whose faith was devoid of innovation and superstition. They accepted the 'Alawi as guests, not knowing that they had come "as lions in sheep's clothing and wolves in the form of lambs."[62] The 'Alawi were:

> determined to weaken the Hadrami people, divide their community, and splinter their unity . . . they divided [the Hadrami people] into strata, and every stratum had limits which could not be overstepped. The highest stratum, which had absolute distinction, was the stratum of the 'Alawi. The middle stratum was the stratum of the tribesmen, and they were equivalent to soldiers. The lowest stratum they called "the weak" and they dominated it with vileness. This was the stratum of the peasants, tradesmen and artisans. When they had completed this division, they commanded the middle and lower strata to glorify and venerate them.[63]

Al-Bakrī elaborated this position in his later book, accusing the 'Alawi of "corrupting the beliefs of the Hadrami people and poisoning their thinking."[64]

Al-Bakrī's view was extreme for its time, and the editor felt compelled to note that the articles were published for the sake of "freedom of expression," and their truth was left to the individual reader to determine. Nevertheless, the view of the *sayyids* as outsiders rapidly gained acceptance within al-Irshad circles. In 1931 'Umar Hubayṣ, the principal of the al-Irshad school in Surabaya, and an influential figure in developing al-Irshad ideology, gave a speech to the al-Irshad congress which provided a similar account of the 'Alawi role in Hadramawt. Before the coming of the 'Alawi, he argued, the Hadramis enjoyed a proud intellectual tradition which produced many Islamic scholars. With the arrival of the 'Alawi—who, he noted pointedly, were not native inhabitants of Hadramawt—the Hadramis were influenced by the claim that superiority lay in descent alone, with the result that "the hopes and real strength in their breasts to obtain glory disappeared." The 'Alawi monopolized all learning and knowledge while the Hadramis, divided among themselves by the 'Alawi, sank into ignorance and laziness.[65] In 1933 an Irshadi writer on the 'Alawi referred to their

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[60] "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fīkrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, January 1928, pp. 2-3; and "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fīkrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, February 1928, pp. 2-3.

[61] R. B. Serjeant, "The Saiyids of Hadramawt," reproduced in his *Studies in Arabian History and Civilisation* (London: Valiorum Reprints, 1981), p. 8.

[62] "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fīkrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, January 1928, p. 2.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 1, p. 78.

[65] "Tarikh 'Al-Irsjad': Voordracht Toean Oemar Hobeis Dalem Congres 'Al-Irsjad' Batavia," in Secretariaat Vereeniging Al-Irsjad, *Gerakan Al-Irsjad* (Batavia: n.p., 1931), pp. 87-8. A version of the speech was published serially in Arabic in *Al-Mishkāh*, June 1 to July 3, 1931.

"hatred for the people of Hadramawt, and the hatred of the people of Hadramawt for them," in a long series of articles prepared for the Malay-language modernist Islamic magazine *Pembela Islam*.[66]

Historically, the suggestion that the alien 'Alawi imposed the stratification system upon a previously egalitarian Hadrami society is difficult to defend. Serjeant has argued that the stratification of southern Arabia dates back to pre-Islamic times, and that South Arabian society "still bears an extraordinarily close resemblance to the society into which the Prophet Muhammad was born."[67] The major change wrought by the *sayyids*, in his view, was to displace the previous spiritual leaders, the *mashā'ikh*, who were relegated to a subordinate position in the social hierarchy.[68] Nevertheless, this suggestion was a potent one for the Irshadis, for it enabled them to justify their opposition to the status of the *sayyids* as a nationalist-style attempt to liberate the Hadramis from oppression and to return Hadrami society to a more pristine past. In this way they could claim that their stance was both more modern, and more true to Hadrami tradition, than that of their opponents.

The similarity between the Irshadi vision of the *sayyids* as foreign oppressors on the one hand, and the anti-Dutch rhetoric of the contemporary Indonesian nationalist movement on the other, is striking. In the 1920s nationalist leaders called on the Indonesian people to unite against the foreigners who had seized power in their country and divided the indigenous population against each other.[69] The similarity was not lost on the Irshadis. In a 1932 pamphlet the Irshadi-'Alawi conflict was introduced to Indonesians in precisely such terms: the *sayyid* demand for veneration on the basis of descent was comparable, the pamphlet argued, to the Dutch demand for the respect of the Indonesians on the grounds of their race. Just as the Indonesians rejected the superiority of the foreign Dutch, the Hadramis rejected the authority of the *sayyids*.[70]

THE TITLE FIGHT

The conflict between the *sayyid* vision that being Hadrami required adherence to the stratification system, and the Irshadi vision that being Hadrami was the polar opposite of being a *sayyid*, culminated in the early 1930s with a "title fight": the debate over whether or not the 'Alawi were entitled to exclusive use of the title "*sayyid*." At the al-Irshad congress held in Batavia in May 1931, a resolution was passed declaring that the word "*sayyid*" was not a title indicating descent from the Prophet, but merely an Arabic word which was equivalent to the Malay "Tuan" or the English "Mister." The resolution read:

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[66] "I'tiqad Al-Ba 'Alwi tentang ketinggian dirinja dan bahaja-bahaja i'tiqad itoe," *Pembela Islam*, March 9, 1933, p. 17. This series of articles was published in *Pembela Islam*, on an irregular basis, from September 1931 until at least March 1, 1935.

[67] R. B. Serjeant, "South Arabia," in *Commoners, Climbers and Notables: A Sampler of Studies on Social Ranking in the Middle East*, ed. C. A. O. van Nieuwenhuijze (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), p. 226.

[68] Serjeant, "The Saiyids of Hadramawt," pp. 11-14.

[69] John Ingleson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia and the Indonesian Nationalist Movement, 1923-1928* (Clayton: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1975), pp. 9-24.

[70] Perserikatan Al-Irsjad, *Titel Sayid Djadi Oeroesan Pemerintah Tjampoer Tangan?* (Batavia: n.p., 1932), pp. 13-16.

> In view of the misunderstanding prevailing among many people, especially writers in the newspapers and some circles of government like the post office, regarding the meaning of the words "sayyid" and "shaykh," and their labeling of the Irshadi party as the party of the shaykhs and the 'Alawi party as the party of the *sayyids*, and their assumption that these two words are titles which apply particularly to one group and not to the other, the congress decided to explain to the public: that the word *sayyid* has a meaning similar to "tuan" in Malay, and it can be given to any respected person.[71]

According to the Irshadis, the word *"sayyid"* was only an indicator that the addressee was a man worthy of respect. The 'Alawi may have convinced the Hadramis that descendants of the Prophet were entitled to this title exclusively, but this was yet another sign of their oppression of the Hadrami people. The Irshadis pointed out that the word *"sayyid"* was increasingly being used as a general term of address in various Arabic-speaking countries.[72] To popularize such a usage in the Indies, they began to refer to themselves as *sayyids* in their publications, legal documents, name boards in front of their houses and shops, and other public places.[73]

The *sayyids* themselves were quick to point out that this stance was contrary to previous practice among the Irshadis.[74] The first generation leaders of al-Irshad had adhered carefully to the custom of noting descendants of the Prophet as *sayyids* and other Hadramis as shaykhs, whether in their publications or in the handwritten minutes of their meetings.[75] Moreover, the very constitution of the organization enshrined the *sayyid* title, for its fifth article declared that "none of the *sayyids*" was permitted to become a member of the executive.[76] The rejection of this practice by the second-generation leaders marked their growing alienation from the *sayyids* and contempt for their role in Hadrami society. They hoped that this resolution, when implemented, would eliminate the last vestiges of *sayyid* status. In the words of the secretary of the al-Irshad executive, the *sayyid* title was "the very last bastion" of the 'Alawi.[77]

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[71] Far' Al-Irshād bi-Sūrābāyā, *Mulakhkhaṣ Qarārāt li-Mu'tamar Al-Irshādī* (Surabaya: n.p., 1931), p. 15.

[72] Idārah Jam'īyyah al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād al-'Arabīyyah, *Wa Qul Jā'a al-Ḥaqq wa Zahaqa al-Bāṭil* (Batavia: n.p., 1931), pp. 13-14; and "Balesan dari fihak Al-Irsjad," in Secretariaat Vereeniging Al-Irsjad, *Gerakan Al-Irsjad*, pp. 31-2 (reprint of an article originally published in *Keng Po*, May 26, 1931).

[73] *Al-Jaum*, November 11, 1931, p. 2; "Al-Irsjad in actie?," *Pembela Islam*, April 1932, pp. 13-14.

[74] This point has often been missed by previous scholars. De Jonge, for example, was under the mistaken impression that the conflict over the *sayyid* title took place "between 1912 and 1934." Huub De Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity among the Arabs in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942, *Indonesia* 55 (April 1993): 89.

[75] See, for example, "Al-Sayyid al-Miḥḍār wa awrāq al-akhbār," *Al-Irshād*, September 30, 1920, p. 2; and Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad, Arabic ms., p. 1.

[76] *Sayyid* writers took great delight in pointing out the contradiction. The clause was hastily modified at the same congress, with the words *Āl Bā 'Alawī* replacing *al-Sādah*. Far' Al-Irshād bi-Sūrābāyā, *Mulakhkhaṣ Qarārāt*, p. 16.

[77] Secretariaat Vereeniging Al-Irsjad, *Gerakan Al-Irsjad*, p. 101.

The resolution raised an immediate outcry from the *sayyid* community. To combat the Irshadis, a new committee known as the Lajnah al-Difā' 'an al-Sādah al-'Alawiyīn (Committee for Defense of the 'Alawi Sayyids) was established in Batavia, and it quickly spread to other Javanese cities.[78] In part, the *sayyids* objected to the extremely public manner in which the resolution had been announced. An al-Irshad congress held in Surabaya three years previously had already passed a resolution that the title *"sayyid"* should be given to anyone who deserved respect, irrespective of origins.[79] At that time the resolution received little attention. The announcement of the 1931 resolution, however, was made at a public meeting attended by indigenous and Chinese journalists, and it called upon the entire Indies population to join with the Irshadis in ceasing to use *"sayyid"* as an exclusive title for descendants of the Prophet. The *sayyids* felt that they had been humiliated before the entire Indies public, and for this reason their response was immediate and passionate.[80]

Debate raged in a variety of media. Several Malay language newspapers opened their pages to contributions from both sides.[81] There was also a flurry of pamphlets written in Arabic and Malay.[82] Given the animosity which had existed between the two sides, in varying degrees, since 1914, it should not be surprising that the pamphlets frequently featured personal abuse and the re-airing of old grievances.[83]

The *sayyids* claimed that the title *"sayyid"* was long established by custom in Hadramawt, in the Indies, and in other parts of the Islamic world. Here again the question of Hadrami identity resurfaced: the title should be maintained, the *sayyids* seemed to argue, because it was a true Hadrami tradition. They cited a wide range of sources to confirm this customary usage: everyday conversation in Hadramawt, official documents from Hadramawt and the Indies, Arabic and Malay dictionaries, the works of western Islamicists such as Snouck Hurgronje, and statements solicited from such authorities as the Shaykh of Al-Azhar University in Cairo, the Qu'ayṭī Sultan, and Imam Yahya of Yemen.[84] In fact, however, this was a point which the Irshadis did not dispute. "That the word is generally understood to refer to one group," conceded 'Abdullāh Bājurāi, "no-one can deny. But should this be made a basis [for the assertion] that the custom may not change?"[85]

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[78] "Lajnah al-difā' 'an al-sādah," *Ḥaḍramawt*, July 10, 1931, p. 3; and "Wafd lajnah al-difā' 'an al-sādah al-'Alawiyīn," *Ḥaḍramawt*, August 10, 1931, p. 1.

[79] "Al-mu'tamar al-irshādī," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-December 1928, p. 13; and Idārah Jam'īyyah al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād al-'Arabīyyah, *Wa Qul Jā'a al-Ḥaqq*, p. 19.

[80] Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq*, esp. pp. 30-1.

[81] A selection of these writings, representing views from both sides, is collected in Secretariaat Vereeniging Al-Irsjad, *Gerakan Al-Irsjad*.

[82] The most important publications on the *sayyid* side were *Haqa'iq atau Keterangan yang Benar* and *Boekti Kebenneran oentoek Oemoem Kaoem Moeslimin*; and for the Irshadis, *Titel Sayid Djadi Oeroesan Pemerintah Tjampoer Tangan?* and *Wa Qul Jā'a al-Ḥaqq*—the latter title from a verse of the *Qur'an*. An English translation of the last pamphlet can be found at R/20/A/3413, IOL.

[83] A good example is the attack made on Sūrkatī, citing some of his writings from 1924, in Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq*, pp. 33-6.

[84] Ibid., pp. 16-33; and C. Snouck Hurgronje papers (OR 18.097 no. 60), Oriental Manuscripts Collection, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.

[85] Secretariaat Vereeniging Al-Irsjad, *Gerakan Al-Irsjad*, p. 77.

The underlying issue, then, was not whether use of the title *"sayyid"* was customary, but whether the custom should be retained.

At this point the conflict returned to the older question of whether the *sayyids* possessed any special status. According to the *sayyids*, the title had to be retained so that descendants of the Prophet could easily be identified, and the special laws which related to them—such as the law of *kafā'ah* in marriage—could be upheld. If anyone could use the title "sayyid," they argued, then "marriages and inheritances etc. which according to the *sharī'ah* were *not* valid would be made *as if they were* valid, something *haram* would be made *as if it were halal.*"[86] In other words the title must be retained so that Islamic law could be implemented correctly.[87] Moreover the title, which was considered a "sign" of their descent, was necessary in order to remind the *sayyids* themselves of their particular role in society. As one *sayyid* writer lamented:

> the disappearance of the sign of our descent would be very dangerous for our grandchildren in the future. Because there is nothing else to remind them of their origins, so that they will all forget their responsibilities as descendants of the Prophet.[88]

The *sayyid* stance was repeated in petitions seeking legal recognition of the title which were presented to both the Dutch and British colonial authorities.[89] This tactic was countered, on the Irshadi side, by petitions of their own.[90] The Irshadis argued that legal recognition of the title would lead to a restoration of the prestige and privileges which the 'Alawi had previously enjoyed; and they called on the Dutch government to maintain its position of neutrality in the conflict by refusing the 'Alawi request. Intensive lobbying by the Irshadis of the Adviser for Native Affairs, E. Gobee, convinced him that the *sayyids* were fighting a losing battle, widespread use of the title by Irshadis having already rendered its previous meaning irretrievable.[91] In accordance with Gobee's advice (and against that of Snouck Hurgronje) the government informed both sides in February 1933 that

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[86] Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq*, p. 34. Italics in original.

[87] Another law cited in this context was the ban on descendants of the Prophet receiving *zakāh* (alms tax). Muslims needed to know who the *sayyids* were in order to avoid violating this law. Comitee Pembela Bangsa Sajid, *Boekti Kebenneran*, pp. 36-9.

[88] Loedjnatoen Nasjr Watta'lief Arrabitatoel 'Alawijah, *Haqa'iq*, p. 17.

[89] Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah to Governor-General, June 10, 1931, mr. 951/31, located in vb. August 21, 1931, no. 8, MK, ARA; see also Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah to Gobee, November 24, 1931, and to Governor-General, May 9, 1932, both located in mr. 1265x/32, MK, ARA. On the British side the most important correspondence can be found at R/20/A/3413, IOL.

[90] Al-Irshad to Governor-General, February 12, 1932, mr. 1265x/32, MK, ARA.

[91] Gobee initially favored an administrative recognition of the *sayyid* title. Lobbying by the Irshadis appears to be the reason why he changed his mind, eventually recommending that the government take no action. Gobee to Governor-General, October 29, 1932, mr. 1265x/32, MK, ARA.

it would not legislate on the issue.[92] It suggested instead that the distinction between 'Alawi and non-'Alawi could be maintained by the addition of *al-'Alawi* at the end of the names of 'Alawi who chose to do so. *Sayyid* protests against this decision failed to change the government's stance.[93]

With the failure of the *sayyid* petitions, it seemed that the Irshadis would be victorious in the conflict over the *sayyid* title. Their victory was tacitly recognized in March 1934, when *sayyids* from around the archipelago attended a "General 'Alawi Sayyid Congress" in Pekalongan.[94] The organizers had intended that the congress would petition the government yet again for legal protection of the title and status of the *sayyids*, and hoped to rally the *sayyids* for the next phase of their conflict with the Irshadis. But the congress agenda was taken over by a new generation of young *sayyids* who were convinced that the government was unlikely to reverse its previous decision, and believed in any case that further pursuit of the title issue would only distract the *sayyids* from the real problems which they faced, first among which was the modernization of education. Under their leadership, the congress resolved not to discuss the issue of the *sayyid* title and not to send another petition to the government. Rather than demanding their traditional rights, as their fathers had done only a few years before, they did no more than pass a resolution which politely thanked those Hadramis who continued to pay respect and sympathy to the 'Alawi.[95]

Despite this apparent acknowledgment of their victory, however, it soon became clear to the Irshadis that they had only won a battle in a long-running war. On both sides, the rhetoric of *waṭanīyyah* led inexorably toward greater involvement with their homeland. Attempts to transfer the ideals of the *nahḍah* to Hadramawt gained momentum in the 1930s; and as their contact with the *waṭan* increased, the Irshadis realized that they faced *sayyid* opposition which was far more powerful than that which they had confronted in the Indies.

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[92] First government secretary to executives of Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah and al-Irshad, February 3, 1933, mr. 141x/33, MK, ARA. Snouck Hurgronje's advice on the question, which recommended legal protection for the title, can be found in *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936*, ed. E. Gobee and C. Adriaanse (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), vol. 2, pp. 1596-9.

[93] Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah to Governor-General, August 29, 1933, mr. 1360/33, MK, ARA.

[94] Gobee to Governor-General, April 7, 1934, enclosing report on the congress by Ḥusayn Bāmashmūs, mr. 511x/34, MK, ARA.

[95] Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

AWAKENING THE HOMELAND

He himself [Sultan 'Alī bin Ṣalāḥ] wanted to go through India to Singapore and Java in order to visit Hadhrami centers there and to see how and where the conception of the new Hadhramaut came to birth.[1]

When Daan van der Meulen and Hermann von Wissmann made their historic expedition to the interior of Hadramawt in 1931, they became the first Europeans to traverse the Wadi Hadramawt in the twentieth century.[2] What they saw dazzled them. Despite the complete absence of Europeans in the valley, the evidence of European influence was everywhere. *Sayyids* in Shibām, Say'ūn and Tarīm drove motor cars, decorated their homes with European furnishings, smoked Dutch cigars, and used refrigerators.[3] Bathing by moonlight in a garden swimming-pool, van der Meulen pondered: "Is this real? Is this actually Hadramaut, the secluded, the fanatical, the poor?"[4]

The men responsible for introducing these luxuries to Hadramawt were merchants who had made their fortunes in the Netherlands East Indies or Singapore, and returned to their *waṭan* to live out their days in comfort. Their transfer of modern material culture to their homeland changed the landscape of Hadramawt.[5] But just as important as these physical changes, although less apparent to the eye, were the intellectual changes which these "returnees" brought about.

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[1] D. van der Meulen, *Aden to the Hadhramaut: A Journey in South Arabia* (London: John Murray, 1947), p. 166.

[2] D. van der Meulen and H. von Wissmann, *Hadramaut: Some of its Mysteries Unveiled* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964), pp. 4-8. Although several Europeans had visited the port of Mukallā—W. H. Lee Warner traveling as far inland as the Qu'ayṭī town of Shibām—none had entered the Kathīrī towns of Say'ūn and Tarīm since Leo Hirsch in 1893. Lee Warner's report of his journey has been published in *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print*, ed. Robin Bidwell (University Publications of America, 1985), part 2, series B, vol. 1, pp. 31-44. See also his observations in W. H. Lee Warner, "Notes on the Hadhramaut," *The Geographical Journal* 77,3 (March 1931): 217-22.

[3] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, pp. 114-115, 124, 127, and 137.

[4] Ibid., p. 115.

[5] On their architectural impact, see Salma Samar Damluji, *The Valley of Mud Brick Architecture: Shibam, Tarim and Wadi Hadramut* (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1992), pp. 230-4.

From the late 1920s onwards, documents emanating from Hadramawt attest to the spread of key concepts of the *nahḍah*. Texts as diverse as proclamations of the Hadrami rulers, reports sent to Arabic newspapers in the Indies and Singapore, and conversations reported by European travelers to Hadramawt like Daan van der Meulen, Freya Stark, and W. H. Ingrams are peppered with ideas of "awakening," "reform," "equality," and even the notion of "Hadrami-ness" itself. The entry of these concepts into public language in Hadramawt was due in part to the circulation of newspapers from the Indies. More important, however, was the program of social, political, and educational reforms which "returnees" were undertaking. Through the introduction of modern communications and the establishment of schools, they had inaugurated a new phase in the Hadrami *nahḍah*: the awakening of the homeland.

THE IDEOLOGY OF REFORM AND THE HADRAMI REFORM CONGRESSES

The notion that the migrant Hadramis should become involved in the reform of their homeland was present among the men of the *nahḍah* from its earliest years. By 1915 there already existed a sense of duty to initiate reforms in Hadramawt comparable to those being undertaken in the Indies. A typical article in *Al-Bashīr* was "Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-waṭan" (Reform and the Homeland), submitted by a self-styled "servant to his *waṭan*." The writer called on his fellow countrymen to act for the reform of their homeland, arguing that the Hadramis, like all other peoples, had a duty to work for the benefit of their country.[6] Such a stance was repeated in probably every Hadrami periodical which appeared during the following decade. There was widespread agreement that Hadramawt was backward and ignorant, and that its inhabitants were so divided among themselves, and so preoccupied with their own interests, that they were unable to consider the national good.[7]

Reform was clearly necessary, but opinion varied as to the precise direction which it should take. One contributor to *Al-Irshād* in 1920 viewed educational reform as the fundamental goal:

> Everyone who loves his *waṭan* is obliged to turn his attention towards illuminating his *waṭan* with the lights of the sciences and knowledge, and to expend whatever he attains in its reconstruction. For the prosperity of a people lies in the prosperity of its *waṭan*, and there is nothing more beneficial to a *waṭan* than spreading sciences and knowledge among its people.[8]

Another contributor held religious scholars and intellectuals responsible for the country's backwardness, and called upon those groups to take the lead in its reconstruction.[9] The editor of *Būrūbūdūr* argued that the migrant Hadramis should concentrate on improving the physical infrastructure of the country, beginning with the construction of proper roads.[10] A more comprehensive reform program was put

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[6] "Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-waṭan," *Al-Bashīr*, January 1, 1915, p. 1.

[7] "Wājibāt al-waṭan," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 1.

[8] "Al-Tamaddun," *Al-Irshād*, December 16, 1920, p. 2.

[9] "Wājibāt al-waṭan," *Al-Irshād*, July 22, 1920, p. 1.

[10] "Ḥaḍramawt wa'l-Ḥaḍramīyūn," *Būrūbūdūr*, December 10, 1921, as cited in *IPO* 51 (1921).

forward by Shaykh 'Umar bin 'Alī Makārim, editor of the weekly paper *Al-Qisṭās*, in 1923. 'Umar Makārim argued for a Hadrami Federation to be based in the Indies, of which all Hadrami organizations would be members. The federation would endeavor to advance the Hadrami community and its homeland in religious, social, cultural, and intellectual respects. Specific projects would include establishment of schools and institutes throughout Hadramawt, including schools for girls, appointment of propagandists to give scientific lectures and to publish newspapers, sending delegations to other Islamic and non-Islamic countries to gain modern knowledge, and providing charity for the poor, orphans, and widows, including free education and refuges.[11]

Despite the abundance of rhetoric in favor of bringing reform to the homeland, little seems to have been achieved during the early years of the *nahḍah*. Makārim's grand plan for a federation of Hadrami organizations was stillborn. A reform society was founded in Say'ūn in 1912 at the instigation of Hadrami reformers in Batavia, but it foundered due to opposition from prominent local *sayyids*.[12] A *sayyid*-dominated organization was established in Surabaya to raise funds for a modern school in Say'ūn, but its achievements appear to have been meager.[13] This apparent failure can perhaps be attributed to the fact that the reformers were fully occupied with their activities in the Indies. Compared with the need to establish a school in one's own town—indeed, for one's own son—the need for schools in Hadramawt must have seemed far less urgent.

But the calls to reform the homeland gained in frequency and intensity from the late 1920s, due in part to an extraordinary event which occurred in Hadramawt in 1927. It will be recalled from chapter one that the urban centers of Hadramawt fell under the authority of two sultanates, the littoral Qu'ayṭī and the inland Kathīrī, tribes which had been in conflict with each other for much of the nineteenth century.[14] In October 1927, Ṣāliḥ bin Ghālib al-Qu'ayṭī, heir to the Qu'ayṭī throne, invited the Kathīrī sultan, along with various Hadrami *sayyids* and notables, to a meeting in the port town of Shiḥr.[15] The proclaimed purpose of the meeting was to discuss "laying the groundwork for unity and cooperation in reform."[16] The meeting, which became known as the First Hadrami Reform Congress, resulted in the promulgation of a fresh Qu'ayṭī-Kathīrī agreement called the Treaty of Shiḥr. The treaty contained twelve clauses committing the two governments to cooperate in

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[11] "Al-Jāmi'ah al-Ḥaḍramīyyah," *Al-Qisṭās*, March 3, 1923, p. 1.

[12] Ulrike Freitag, "Hadhramis in International Politics c. 1750-1967" in *Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s-1960s*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and William G. Clarence-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 1997), p. 124.

[13] *Al-Iqbāl*, October 15, 1918, as cited in *IPO* 45 (1918); and *Al-Iqbāl*, October 9, 1920, as cited in *IPO* 44 (1920). A later article referred to a sum of 750 guilders which had been raised from Surabayan Hadramis to support the establishment of schools in Hadramawt, but it is not clear whether this was an achievement of the same organization. *Al-Iqbāl*, December 4, 1920, as cited in *IPO* 3 (1921).

[14] W. H. Ingrams, *A Report on the Social, Economic and Political Condition of the Hadhramaut* (London: Colonial No. 123, 1937), pp. 31-5.

[15] Ṣalāḥ 'Abd al-Qādir Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā Al-Bābī Al-Ḥalabī, 1956), vol. 2, p. 56.

[16] Proclamation of the Kathīrī sultan contained in ibid., p. 61. The text of this and other relevant announcements is translated into English, unfortunately rather badly, and enclosed in Crosby to Chamberlain, April 11, 1928, FO371/13005, PRO.

maintaining peace, to provide assistance for the poor, to station delegates in each other's territory, and to authorize the formation of a council of representatives in Hadramawt with the ill-defined task to "assist the said two Governments in preserving peace and justice."[17]

The First Reform Congress was remarkable for a number of reasons. The previous treaty between the two sultanates, the Qu'ayṭī-Kathīrī agreement, had been signed in 1918 only after the British government stopped all remittances from Southeast Asia to Kathīrī territory, thereby cutting off the lifeblood of the Kathīrīs until they submitted to the treaty.[18] Now both sides appeared to be agreeing voluntarily to a new treaty, which included the unprecedented proposal for a representative council to advise the rulers. This development must be considered in reference to important changes which had occurred in the power structure of both states in the preceding years. In the Qu'ayṭī sultanate, Sultan Ghālib had died in 1922 and was succeeded by his brother, Sultan 'Umar. 'Umar spent much of his reign residing in India, however, and invitations to the conference were sent by Ṣāliḥ, Ghālib's son and the heir to the throne, who was acting as ruler in the absence of his uncle.[19] His support for the conference may therefore be viewed as the act of a young ruler, more impatient for change than his predecessors.[20] The motive of the Kathīrī ruler, on the other hand, can be linked to the growing dependence on wealthy *sayyids*, in particular the al-Kāf family, for a large portion of Kathīrī revenue.[21] Indeed, Christian Lekon has suggested that the congress was the result of pressure imposed by the al-Kāf *sayyids*, which could not be refused by the Kathīrī ruler without jeopardizing his own finances.[22]

While the evidence is probably too thin to prove Lekon's assertion, the link with the al-Kāfs—whose family fortune was derived from extensive property holdings in Singapore[23]—provides a clue for understanding these events. The congress was an attempt by Hadrami rulers to attract the wealth of the Hadramis in Southeast Asia back to Hadramawt, by offering the prospect of cooperative reforms. The congress was playing to a Southeast Asian audience. The final clause of the agreement required the dispatch of an emissary to the Hadrami community in Southeast Asia in order to inform the Hadramis there of the results of the congress. Indeed, it soon became clear that both Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī were practically inviting the emigrant Hadramis to undertake reforms in Hadramawt.

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[17] Enclosure 1, Crosby to Chamberlain, April 11, 1928, FO371/13005, PRO.

[18] See the correspondence in R/20/A/2941, IOL.

[19] The complicated structure of state authority is discussed in Ingrams, *A Report*, pp. 80-2.

[20] It is clear from later events that he did not seek 'Umar's approval either for the conference or for his signature of the new treaty. Ṣāliḥ proved himself to be a reforming monarch when he finally succeeded to the throne in 1936. R. J. Gavin, *Aden under British Rule, 1839-1967* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1975), p. 303; Freitag, "Hadhramis in International Politics," p. 128.

[21] In 1934 some 30 percent of the Kathīrī state income was provided by a direct donation from the al-Kāf. Ingrams, *A Report*, p. 133.

[22] Christian Lekon, "Before Ingrams: Labour Remittances and Conflict in Hadhramawt, 1914-1934" (unpublished paper presented to the International Workshop on Hadramawt and the Hadrami Diaspora, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1995), pp. 9-10.

[23] On the al-Kāfs in Singapore see Charles Burton Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965), p. 564; and C. M. Turnbull, *A History of Singapore, 1819-1975* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 100-1.

When their official emissary, the Meccan Ṭayyib al-Sāsī, arrived in Singapore, he carried with him proclamations from both parties which announced that they had "opened the door to reformist activities in all parts of Hadramawt."[24]

The language and content of these proclamations was strikingly similar to those current among the Hadramis of the *nahḍah*. The rulers urged the Hadramis of Southeast Asia to establish a new organization which would assist in "the necessary national reforms" such as spreading education and forming national corporations for the advancement of agriculture and establishment of industry.[25] This proposal bears a close resemblance to 'Umar Makārim's suggestion for a Hadrami federation. Sultan Ṣāliḥ emphasized that he supported the introduction of modern education incorporating subjects such as mathematics, natural science, political economy, and medicine: "all the sciences which the community needs in order to serve its *waṭan*" (an expression which could have come directly from any Indies Arabic newspaper). He felt that the Hadramis who had gone abroad must play a leading role in this process, for it was they "whose thinking has been enlightened by their close contact with foreigners," and he pledged the support of his government for educational endeavors.[26] The letter of the Kathīrī ruler was even more blunt about what was really required, pointing out that "money is the beginning of all activities." It is not possible to trace a direct causal link between the ideas of the Hadramis in the Indies and these proclamations, but the similarity between them is compelling. It seems plausible that the circulation of Indies newspapers in the homeland,[27] as well as the continuing flow of men between the Indies and Hadramawt (about 1,500 Hadrami men traveled from Java to Hadramawt each year),[28] was already influencing the thinking of important figures there.

As news of the First Hadrami Reform Congress filtered back to the Indies, reform-minded Hadramis saw it as a unique opportunity to become more involved in the affairs of their homeland. One pro-Irshadi newspaper called on that organization to begin establishing schools in Hadramawt, observing that there remained no excuse not to engage in reform now that the Sultan had expressed his desire to rescue the country from its present state of ignorance.[29] Despite some signs of Irshadi interest, however, it was *sayyids* who seized the opportunity offered by Ṭayyib al-Sāsī's arrival in Singapore by organizing the self-styled Second Hadrami Reform Congress, which was held in Singapore in April 1928. Its purpose was to view the documents carried by al-Sāsī and to formulate rules which would unite the Hadramis in Southeast Asia with those in the homeland "for the purpose of uplifting the sons of the soil."[30] From the Indies the second congress was attended by representatives of the recently-formed al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah, Jam'īyyah

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[24] Proclamation of the Kathīrī sultan contained in al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, p. 61.

[25] Proclamation of Sultan Ṣāliḥ contained in ibid., p. 58.

[26] Ibid., pp. 58-9.

[27] Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, "The Arab Periodicals of the Netherlands East Indies, 1914-1942," *BKI* 152,2 (1996): 244-5.

[28] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 33.

[29] "Halummū ilā al-'amal," *Al-Ma'ārif*, October 20, 1927, p. 2.

[30] Enclosure no. 8, Crosby to Chamberlain, April 11, 1928, FO371/13005, PRO, is the agenda circulated prior to the meeting.

Khayr, and al-Khayrīyyah, all organizations dominated by *sayyids*.[31] Al-Irshad, suspicious of the intentions of the *sayyids*, declined the invitation to send delegates.[32] Representatives of the Singapore-based Arab Cultural Club (Nādī al-Adabī al-'Arabī), other Singaporean Hadramis, and representatives from Hadrami settlements in various parts of the Malay peninsula, completed what appears to have been a small attendance.[33]

The Second Reform Congress passed twenty-three resolutions which Ṭayyib al-Sāsī was requested to place before the Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī rulers. Far more than a mere set of rules, these resolutions amounted to a thorough critique of the current state of affairs in Hadramawt, seen from the perspective of the migrant traders.[34] The congress supported the establishment of a national assembly in Hadramawt, in which the migrant Hadramis in Southeast Asia and elsewhere were to be represented. It envisaged this assembly as far more than an advisory council. The congress insisted that both governments submit their annual budgets to the assembly for modification and approval—implying that the governments would have a degree of responsibility to the assembly. It also called for reforms to the legal system, regularization of customs houses, and a comprehensive truce between the warring tribesmen of Hadramawt. It requested the establishment of a department of education which would be authorized to supervise all schools with the aim of improving their organization, unifying their curriculum, and expanding education throughout the country. Several resolutions dealt with the formation of a national trading company which would receive preferential treatment from both Hadrami governments. Finally, the particular needs of the Hadramis abroad were to be met by the attachment of Hadrami officials to British consulates or passport offices, and the appointment of a committee to resolve the Irshadi-'Alawi dispute once and for all.

The resolutions of the Second Hadrami Reform Congress provided the clearest illustration so far of the kind of reforms which the Hadramis in the diaspora considered necessary for their homeland. Although the Irshadis boycotted the congress, they would probably have agreed with most of the reforms which the meeting proposed. Several themes stand out: the need for just and accountable government, the removal of obstacles to free communications and trade (for example, through the regularization of customs and promulgation of a truce), and the importance of education. It is clear that those who attended the congress had imbibed the rhetoric of the modern colonial powers. The resolutions invoke several themes which were present in the Ethical Policy of the Dutch in the Indies, for example, and seem also to bear the imprint of Singapore, the British colony where the congress was held.

Underlying all of the resolutions was a vision of Hadramawt as a unified modern nation. The proposals for one national assembly (*jam'īyyah waṭanīyyah*) to which both sultanates would be responsible, one national trading company, and one department of education (rather than, say, Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī equivalents of

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[31] *Al-Mahdjar*, June 1928.

[32] Crosby to Chamberlain, April 11, 1928, FO371/13005, PRO.

[33] *Al-Mahdjar*, June 1928. Only twelve participants signed the final conference resolutions.

[34] The resolutions can be found in their original Arabic form in al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 66-75. They were published in Malay in *Al-Mahdjar*, July 1928, while an English translation is located at R/20/A/3293, IOL.

each) carried this implication, which is perhaps a natural corollary to the notion of Hadrami-ness. But it presented a clear challenge to the system of independent sultanates by which Hadramawt had previously been governed.

It was perhaps for this reason that the resolutions of the Second Reform Congress did not fare well back in the homeland. Although they were apparently approved by Sultan Ṣāliḥ, who wrote of his agreement to the executive committee established by the congress,[35] the resolutions were soundly rejected by his uncle Sultan 'Umar upon his return from India. 'Umar's denunciation of the resolutions, which "would result in great harm to the Hadrami region, although outwardly . . . one may think that they involve some reform," appeared in the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahrām*, and was reprinted in Java in the Irshadi paper *Al-Dahnā'*.[36] 'Umar predicted that the resolutions would bring division among the people of Hadramawt, and he accused al-Sāsī (whom he promptly exiled) of pursuing his own personal ambitions. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Sultan 'Umar was shocked by the restrictions on his power which the resolutions, if implemented, would entail. The congress demanded that the Hadrami rulers should submit their annual budgets to public scrutiny and amendment, and the demand must be weighed against the observation of British officials that 'Umar was in the habit of transferring tax revenues from Hadramawt to his private account in India, and that "no one knows what he really spends."[37] His denunciation of the resolutions may therefore be viewed as a defensive tactic to hold on to his own power and wealth.

At first the Hadrami Reform Congresses appeared to be a failure. But despite 'Umar's success in defeating the resolutions, the spirit which the congresses had engendered could not be subdued. On the contrary, the next few years were marked by a strengthening ideology of reforming the homeland among Hadramis in the Indies. One indicator of the raised tempo was the appearance, for the first time, of pro-reform cartoons in the Indies Arabic press. In 1929 the lithographed journal *Barhūt* published two cartoons which set an agenda for the 1930s. Above the caption "love for the homeland is part of faith," the first cartoon showed Hadramawt as a sick man laid out on a stretcher while the newspaper *Barhūt* offered bottles labeled "medicine."[38] Two issues later, another cartoon graphically depicted "Hadramawt where drought and hunger are at play." The starving inhabitants were shown fleeing to the coast in order to escape the drought and hunger. Meanwhile, sitting in a roofed house on European-style chairs, "the traders are eating and drinking and unconcerned about Hadramawt and the famine there."[39] Both cartoons sent a clear message that the Hadramis in the Indies neglected their duties if they did not work for the reform of the ailing Hadramawt. It seemed that once the gates of the homeland had been opened to reformers, they could not easily be closed.

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[35] *Al-Mahdjar*, October 1928.

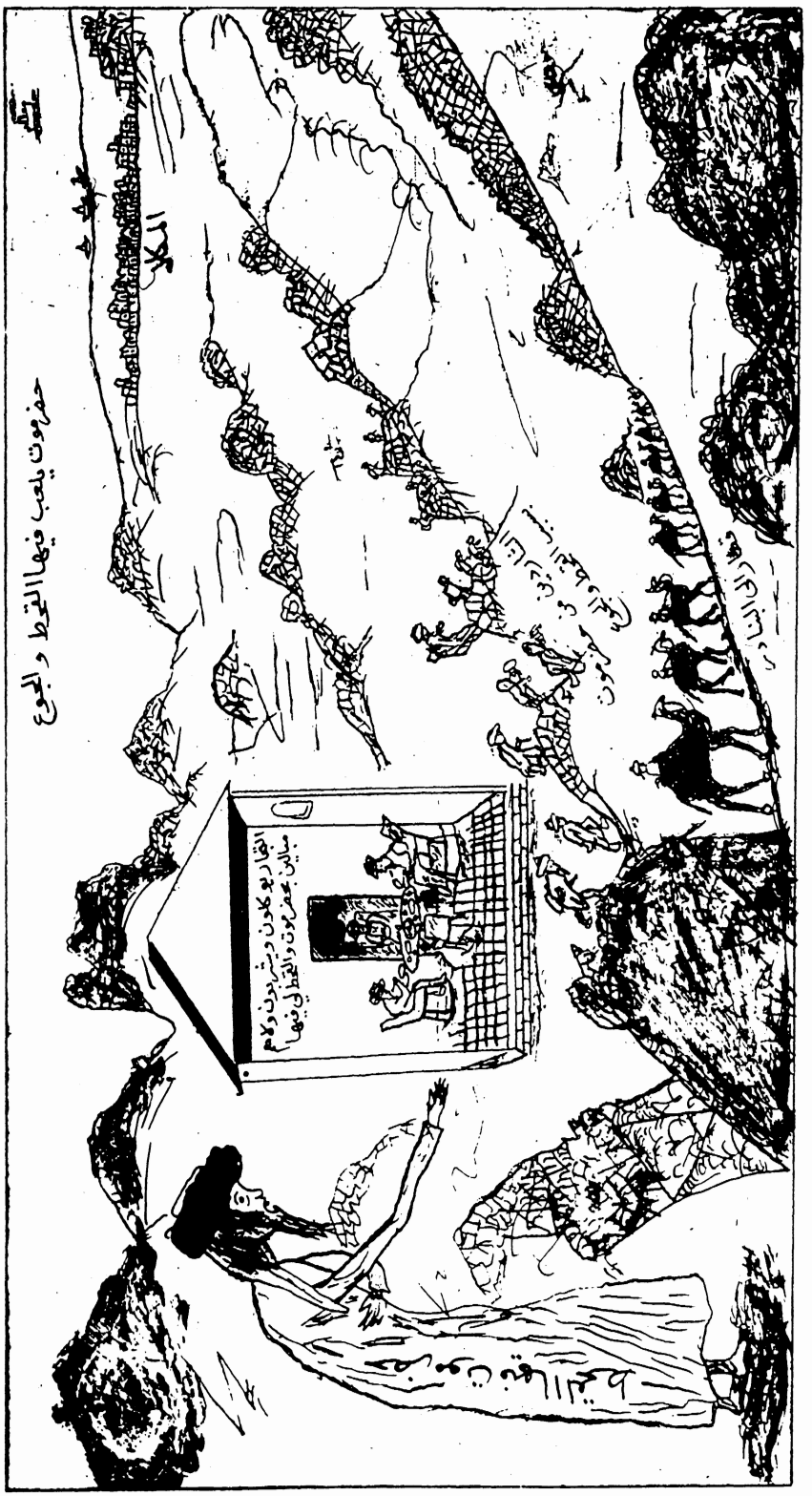
[36] Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 64-5; and *Al-Dahnā'*, October 1928, pp. 7-8. The Irshadis, glad that for a change it was not their organization which was out of favor with the Hadrami ruler, trumpeted what they saw as the failure of the 'Alawi congress.

[37] Lekon, "Before Ingrams," pp. 4-5. See also W. H. Ingrams, "Political Development in the Hadhramaut," *International Affairs* 21,2 (April 1945): 239.

[38] *Barhūt*, November 15, 1929, p. 4. The text in the balloons, written in Hadrami dialect, offers encouragement to the homeland to drink *Barhūt*'s medicine.

[39] *Barhūt*, December 15, 1929, p. 3.

"Love for the homeland is part of faith"
Barhūt, no. 1, November 15, 1929



"Hadramawt where drought and hunger are at play"
Barhūt, no. 3, December 15, 1929

BUILDING THE NEW HADRAMAWT

During the 1930s the ideals of the *nahḍah* were spread by the growing number of Hadrami reformers who returned to settle in their homeland. Already in 1931 Daan van der Meulen attested to the influence of the "returnees." Echoing the language of the reformers themselves, he observed: "One receives the impression that the country, inspired by the set of men in Terim, is beginning to wake up."[40] Tarīm, the home of the al-Kāf, was "a town of much youthful enthusiasm for a new Hadhramaut."[41] The ideas current on the reformers' lips, he reported, were "reform and a national rebirth"—concepts which can be traced back to the earliest years of the awakening.[42]

At the most obvious level, "building the new Hadramawt" (a phrase used repeatedly by van der Meulen) involved the construction of houses. Returned migrants from the Indies and Singapore competed with each other in constructing new palaces which ingeniously replicated modern colonial architecture while using the only building material available in abundant supply in Hadramawt: mud. Every European who traveled in Hadramawt during the 1930s repeated van der Meulen's sense of wonder at these buildings. Bernard Reilly, visiting Hadramawt for the first time in 1933, was impressed by the degree of "civilization" evident in the presence of cars, garages, and electric lights.[43] W. H. Ingrams was overcome by the houses of wealthy traders in Tarīm in the mid-1930s:

> Interiors are fitted with every up-to-date contrivance, electric light and fans, telephones, ice-plants, and European modern conveniences in the bathrooms, wash-basins with running water and shower-baths . . . these houses are replete with European furniture, albeit some of a rather florid style. Large and comfortable chairs and sofas decorate the drawing-rooms, and there are English carpets, masses of gilt mirrors, chandeliers and glass cupboards full of marmalade dishes, egg-cups and so on. [44]

This transfer of modernity could only be achieved through painstaking effort, as Ingrams noted:

> Living in such houses as these one is struck at every moment with the reflection that there is hardly a thing in the house that has not had to be transported on camel-back over the mountains for six days.[45]

Many returned migrants also sponsored the building of mosques in their home towns, an action which enhanced their local prestige and resulted in the adornment of Hadramawt with an "abnormally large number of fine mosques."[46] One consequence,

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[40] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 187.

[41] Van der Meulen, *Aden to the Hadhramaut*, p. 191.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Reilly to Secretary of State for Colonies, March 27, 1933, CO725/24/12, PRO.

[44] Ingrams, *A Report*, p. 47.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 68.

observed by van der Meulen, was that "the poorest inhabitant of Hureidha can prostrate himself on an Italian marble floor."[47]

In the same way as they imported Italian marble and carved wooden doors for their houses,[48] several individuals undertook larger-scale projects which aimed to bring modern communications and industry to the Hadrami homeland. The most influential figure in this respect was undoubtedly Sayyid Abūbakr bin Shaykh al-Kāf, a trader who had been born in Singapore but returned to Hadramawt as a teenager.[49] Al-Kāf undertook the construction of the first road between the coastal town of Shiḥr and Tarīm.[50] This road made possible, for the first time, motorized transport of goods and people between the coast and interior of Hadramawt. Among his other distinctions, al-Kāf was responsible for establishing the clinic of the first western-trained doctor to practice medicine in the town of Tarīm around 1930. The same clinic boasted Hadramawt's first practicing dentist, a young member of the al-Kāf family who had worked as assistant to an Egyptian dentist.[51]

Other Hadramis followed the path which al-Kāf had laid. Although most of them belonged to *sayyid* families, some non-*sayyids* initiated reforms of their own. Shaykh 'Awaḍ Bin Marta', for example, a successful merchant from Surabaya, returned to his home town of Haynin around 1930 "to try to check its decay." Among his projects was the introduction of motor pumps to support local irrigation systems.[52] Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin 'Ubayd Bin 'Abdāt can perhaps be placed in the same category of reformers who returned to the homeland. One of the founders of al-Irshad, Bin 'Abdāt returned to Hadramawt in the mid-1920s.[53] Financed by his property holdings in Batavia, he seized power in the town of al-Ghurfah in 1926. There he appears to have prided himself on being a reformist ruler, claiming to have instituted just government for the benefit of the local population.[54] His participation in armed conflict, however, which continued until the Bin 'Abdāts were decisively defeated by the British in 1945, soured his reputation as a reformer. In an article deploring his activities in 1928, the pro-Irshadi newspaper *Al-Dahnā'* lamented: "Don't our people have minds to guide them to reform their *waṭan*, not to destroy it?"[55]

Apart from the case of Bin 'Abdāt, reformist activities were supported by the growing British presence in Hadramawt. Indeed, Hadrami reformers actively

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[47] Van der Meulen, *Aden to the Hadhramaut*, p. 150.

[48] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 136.

[49] W. H. Ingrams, "Peace in the Hadhramaut," *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society* 25 (1938): 510-11.

[50] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 128; and D. van der Meulen, *Faces in Shem* (London: John Murray, 1961), pp. 159-87.

[51] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, pp. 139-40.

[52] Ibid., p. 105.

[53] See chapter three for Bin 'Abdāt's role in al-Irshad during its early years.

[54] Bin 'Abdāt's side of the story was presented in an article published in *Al-Ahrām* on November 18, 1926; its translation can be found in R/20/A/1413, IOL. Whether he attempted any educational reform is not known. For a negative account of Bin 'Abdāt's rule in al-Ghurfah, see Ingrams, "Political Development in the Hadhramaut," pp. 243-4.

[55] "Ḥawl al-Ghurfah," *Al-Dahnā'*, February 1928, p. 4. R. J. Gavin, in his *Aden under British Rule*, pp. 305-7, puts forward the view that Bin 'Abdāt's son Ṣāliḥ, who ruled al-Ghurfah from 1939, had a continuing link with al-Irshad. I have been unable to find any Irshadi source which supports this position.

sought British intervention in the expectation that it would assist the reform process. The driving force behind the British "forward policy" in Hadramawt was W. H. Ingrams, the first Resident Adviser to the Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī rulers. A long-time official of the Colonial Office, Ingrams had served in Zanzibar and Mauritius before being appointed as Political Officer for the Aden Protectorate in 1934. He first visited Hadramawt in the same year and returned in 1936, becoming Resident Adviser in August 1937.[56] This is not the place to discuss the motives behind the British policy which culminated in Ingrams's appointment.[57] The important point to note is that the assertion of British authority generally met with approval and cooperation from Hadrami reformers, in and out of Hadramawt. There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that repeated pleas for British intervention had come from both *sayyids* and Irshadis by the late 1920s. To take one example, in October 1927 an Irshadi delegation consisting of Aḥmad Sūrkatī, 'Umar Manqūsh and Ṣāliḥ bin 'Ubayd Bin 'Abdāt visited J. Crosby, the British Consul-General in Batavia. During their meeting they requested the appointment of a British official to Mukallā.[58] According to Crosby's report, Aḥmad Sūrkatī

> saw but one hope for the future [of Hadramawt], and that was intervention by the British Government, which should put an end to all disorders with a strong hand . . . [Manqūsh] supported Soerkati, and in melancholy accents told me that, unless the British introduced order into the Hadramawt, he would never see his native-land again.

Crosby adds that "precisely the same wishes are expressed by the leaders of the Syed group in Java." Again in 1931, van der Meulen was entrusted by reformist *sayyids* in Hadramawt to convey a request for intervention to the British authorities in Aden.[59] When intervention did occur, it was supported by returned migrants from the Indies, and most importantly by Sayyid Abūbakr bin Shaykh al-Kāf, who worked closely with Ingrams for several years.[60]

The support by Hadrami reformers for British intervention in their homeland is revealing. It is true that some Hadramis in the Indies expressed embarrassment at the lack of resistance to British intervention, coming as it did at a time when the Egyptians and Iraqis were throwing off the colonial yoke.[61] The majority, however, were frustrated by what they saw as the prevailing anarchy in Hadramawt, and their lack of success in overcoming it. Sultan 'Umar's rejection of the resolutions of the Second Reform Congress confirmed their suspicion that widespread reform could not be achieved by working with the Hadrami rulers. The reformers compared "backward" Hadramawt with "advanced" Singapore and Java, and concluded that what their country needed was the strong hand of a progressive colonial authority. Thus, as Gavin has observed, "the warring groups of

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[56] W. H. Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles* (London: John Murray, 1966), pp. 5-27.

[57] The best published account is Gavin, *Aden under British Rule*, pp. 301-3.

[58] Crosby to Political Resident at Aden, October 27, 1927, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[59] Van der Meulen and von Wissmann, *Hadramaut*, p. 184; and van der Meulen, *Aden to the Hadhramaut*, p. 151.

[60] Gavin, *Aden under British Rule*, pp. 301-3.

[61] "Nakbah Ḥaḍramawt," *Al-Murshid*, January 1938, pp. 5-7; and "Ahlal oeroebah! Kamoe ada dimana?," *Aliran Baroe*, May 1939, pp. 11-12.

reformers and the Aden Government were as it were drawn towards one another."[62] The ultimate rationale for cooperation with British intervention is evident when we compare the achievements of Ingrams's first few years with the aims expressed by the Second Reform Congress in Singapore. By 1938 several of the congress resolutions had been attained: there was a general truce throughout the country; customs procedures, the legal system, and government finances had been reorganized; a Director of Education had been appointed to unify and reform schools across Hadramawt; and new roads had been constructed.[63]

Any lingering doubts about the benefits of the British intervention appear to have been dispelled by Ingrams's whistle-stop tour of Java in July and August 1939.[64] Ingrams himself compared this tour to an election campaign[65]; in the course of eight days he spoke at meetings in most of the major Hadrami centers in Java, addressing a total audience of several thousand. The tour appears to have had the same objective as the first Hadrami Reform Congress: to elicit funds from the wealthy Hadramis in Southeast Asia for reform projects in their homeland. It marks a recognition, then, that if reform was to be successful it must have the support of the Indies Hadramis. At the end of his tour, Ingrams reported that he had met not more than half a dozen Hadramis who were hostile towards the British presence in their homeland. The large majority, he considered, were "approving of everything done, uncritical, and very friendly."[66]

EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND THE 'ALAWI-IRSHADI CONFLICT

Educational reform was a high priority for most reformers who returned to Hadramawt. Here again the al-Kāfs were pioneers. In 1920 Abūbakr's brother, 'Abdurraḥmān, had established probably the first modern-style school in Hadramawt, "a Medrassah in Terim where along with religious education, a little secular education [was] also imparted."[67] The school probably did not last long. It faced considerable opposition from conservative *sayyids*, which only abated after its founder invited his opponents to observe the students at their first annual examinations. There are no further reports about the school; it may not have survived its founder's return to Singapore in 1922.[68] Nevertheless, it set a precedent for future educational reform.

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[62] Gavin, *Aden under British Rule*, p. 302.

[63] Ibid., pp. 303-5; W. H. Ingrams, "The Hadhramaut: Present and Future," *The Geographical Journal* 92,4 (October 1938): 289-312; and Ingrams, "Political Development in the Hadhramaut," pp. 236-52.

[64] "Mustashār Ḥukūmatay Ḥaḍramawt fī mahjar al-Ḥaḍārim," *Al-Murshid*, July 15, 1939, pp. 1-2 and August 1, 1939, pp. 1-4; W. H. Ingrams, "Report on a Tour to Malaya, Java and Hyderabad," R/20/C/1066, IOL, parts 4 to 6; and Pijper to Governor-General, November 29, 1939, mr. 1423x/39, MK, ARA.

[65] Harold and Doreen Ingrams, "The Hadhramaut in Time of War," *The Geographical Journal* 105,1/2 (January/February 1945): 11.

[66] Ingrams, "Report on a Tour to Malaya, Java and Hyderabad," p. 124.

[67] "Report by Captain Nasir-ud-din Ahmad, Political Officer, Aden, on his visit to the Hadramaut," FO822/24, PRO, p. 315.

[68] John A. S. Bucknill, "A Note on Some Coins Struck for Use in Tarim, Southern Arabia," *JMBRAS* 3,1 (1925): 2.

From the late 1920s several Hadramis who had been involved in the educational movement in the Indies returned to continue their work in Hadramawt. Prominent among them was Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim, the former editor of *Al-Bashīr*, who returned to Tarīm in 1928 to take up the position of head teacher at a modern-style school in that town.[69] Bin Hāshim remained in Tarīm for many years, promoting the values of modern education among the *sayyids* of the town.[70] Later, in the 1930s, others followed his path: Abūbakr al-Kāf supported the establishment of numerous schools in Qu'ayṭī and Kathīrī territory, and the al-'Aṭṭās family operated a modern-style school in Ḥurayḍah, supported by the income derived from properties which had been purchased for this purpose in Batavia. There Sayyid Ḥāmid al-'Aṭṭās taught classes in mathematics and drawing, utilizing school books he had brought back from Java.[71] Shaykh 'Awaḍ Bin Marta' also supported a school in his home town. This was a Qur'anic school, but in 1939 Bin Marta' was considering the idea of employing a Javanese schoolmaster who would follow the secular curriculum of schools in Java.[72]

Most of the reforms discussed so far were initiated by *sayyids*. But competition between 'Alawi and Irshadis was a feature of, and perhaps even an impetus for, the reform activities undertaken in Hadramawt. News of al-Irshad spread to the homeland almost immediately after its establishment in 1914, carried presumably by Hadramis returning from the Indies. Nasiruddin Ahmed, an Indian Muslim who served the British authorities in Aden as a Political Officer, observed that although he did not meet any members of al-Irshad on his visit to Hadramawt in 1920, "the seeds [of resentment of the *sayyids*] which took root in Java originally . . . have spread out silently into the Hadramaut."[73] Significantly, Ahmed felt, based on his experience in Hadramawt, that Irshadis and *sayyids* had similar aims, and he blamed personal differences for keeping them apart: "both have the good of their country at heart . . . the personal jealousies, however, had lead [sic] them both apart, and they have taken different courses to achieve the same object."[74]

Sayyids in Hadramawt moved quickly to prevent Irshadis from promoting their ideas in the *waṭan*. Whereas the weapons available to defend their status in the Indies were modest, the *sayyids* in Hadramawt were able to marshal all the resources of their powerful social position to the cause of keeping al-Irshad at bay. Leading *sayyids* in Qu'ayṭī territory, and in particular Sayyid Ḥusayn bin Ḥāmid al-Miḥḍār, the chief minister of the Qu'ayṭī government and right-hand man to the reigning Sultan Ghālib, were influential in implementing an anti-Irshadi policy.[75]

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[69] *Al-Mahdjar*, August 1928; and "Al-Ḥurrīyyah al-fikrīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, February 1928, p. 2. Again sponsored by the al-Kāfs, it is possible that this was the successor to the school established in 1920.

[70] His loss was lamented by some reformist *sayyids* in the Indies. "Al-Ustādh al-Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim," *Ḥaḍramawt*, November 7, 1929.

[71] Van der Meulen, *Aden to the Hadhramaut*, p. 145.

[72] Ibid., pp. 161-2.

[73] "Report by Captain Nasir-ud-din Ahmad," p. 291.

[74] Ibid., p. 306.

[75] Al-Bakrī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt Al-Siyāsī*, vol. 2, pp. 288-9. Lee Warner, always prone to exaggeration, described al-Miḥḍār as "the virtual ruler of the country." See Bidwell, ed., *British Documents on Foreign Affairs*, p. 36.

In 1920 Ghālib issued a proclamation which outlawed al-Irshad from his state and called for the abolition of the society.[76] Since the Qu'ayṭī controlled the ports of entry to Hadramawt, this decree effectively barred the organization from Hadrami territory. Meanwhile British officials in the Indies, persuaded by their *sayyid* informants that al-Irshad adopted a pro-Turkish, and therefore anti-British, stance during the war, had for several years been refusing to issue travel passes to Irshadis who wished to visit their homeland. The blockade on travel by Irshadis was lifted in 1920 under the influence of the new British Consul in Batavia, J. Crosby, who was convinced by al-Irshad delegations that the organization was not anti-British. Until 1928, however, news of the impending arrival of any Irshadi to Hadramawt was still cabled by officials in Batavia to Aden, and from Aden to the Qu'ayṭī ruler.[77]

It appears that the first attempt by al-Irshad to establish schools in Hadramawt came in early 1922.[78] Shaykh Muḥammad bin 'Ubayd 'Abūd, former secretary of the al-Irshad executive, traveled to Hadramawt with the intention of laying the groundwork. Passing through Aden on his way to Mukallā, 'Abūd sought to gain support for his project from British officials there. In a note addressed to Bernard Reilly, the First Assistant Resident at Aden, he explained that al-Irshad was "anxious to open Arab schools for the learning of religious and other worldly sciences" in Hadramawt. He requested assistance from the British in the form of an English-language school teacher.[79] British sources in Java, which cannot be identified, alleged that 'Abūd's purpose was to conduct al-Irshad propaganda as well as to supervise the establishment of schools in Hadramawt.[80]

'Abūd's visit ended disastrously. When he arrived in Mukallā in March 1922 he was immediately detained upon the orders of al-Miḥḍār, who had been informed of the visit by Aden authorities.[81] His luggage was searched, his papers seized, and he could only secure his release, several months later, by signing a commitment that he would not become involved in matters of a "political" nature.[82] This bond also stipulated that 'Abūd was not to return to the Indies without

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[76] Circular dated April 12, 1920, enclosed in Stewart to British Consul-General in Batavia, May 20, 1920, FO371/5236, PRO. A Dutch translation of the proclamation is enclosed in Schrieke to Governor-General, August 24, 1920, mr. 956x/20, located in A29 bis I: Corr. over Arabieren in Ned-Indie, A-dossiers 1919-1940, MBZ, ARA. It contains some slight modifications from the original.

[77] The British policy regarding the travel of Irshadis is discussed frankly in Crosby to Curzon, August 27, 1920 and September 27, 1920, FO371/5237, PRO.

[78] Sayyid 'Alī Bin Shahāb, a leading opponent of the organization, reported in 1922 to the British Consul-General in Batavia that al-Irshad had established schools in five towns in Hadramawt. This claim can be dismissed as alarmist, however, for no mention of the alleged schools can be found in any al-Irshad publication. Note enclosed in Gorton to First Political Resident at Aden, May 11, 1922, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[79] 'Abūd to Reilly, March 5, 1922, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[80] Gorton to Political Resident at Aden, April 6, 1922, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[81] Al-Miḥḍār to Reilly, March 19, 1922, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[82] Al-Miḥḍār to Reilly, April 4, 1922, R/20/A/5021, IOL; and Al-Miḥḍār to Reilly, July 14, 1922, R/20/A/1412, IOL. There is considerable dispute over the content of the papers seized. Al-Miḥḍār reported that 'Abūd carried documents of a seditious nature. The copies he included in his letter to Reilly of April 4, if authentic, show that al-Irshad secretly aimed to overthrow the Qu'ayṭī government. Irshadis consistently maintained that the documents were forged. "Al-Istiṭrād," *Al-Shifā'*, July 1922, p. 104.

obtaining the prior consent of the Mukallā authorities, a condition which he broke in order to return to Java in 1924.[83] 'Abūd's treatment at the hands of Qu'ayṭī authorities proved a deterrent to further al-Irshad activities in the homeland for several years.

Renewed Irshadi attempts to undertake activities in Hadramawt began in 1931. This new phase of activity corresponds to the general upsurge in enthusiasm for reform, and reflects the desire of the Irshadis not to be left behind by the *sayyids*. At the al-Irshad congress held in 1931 in Batavia, 'Umar Hubayṣ adopted an apologetic tone in justifying the organization's lack of activity in Hadramawt. According to Hubayṣ, al-Irshad had attempted to take its work of education to the homeland as soon as it was established in the Indies.[84] But few people in Hadramawt had wanted to listen, or perhaps they had been too scared of opposition: al-Irshad "knocked on the door of the *waṭan*, but found no-one to respond."[85] Hubayṣ professed to be philosophical about this failure, observing that "all things come in their own time. The seed was planted but the earth was stubborn." Nevertheless it is clear that the Irshadis felt the time for expansion to Hadramawt had come.[86]

Several schools were established in Hadramawt during the 1930s with the support of al-Irshad. Often these schools were the result of individual initiative, being founded by members or supporters of al-Irshad who returned to Hadramawt and decided to establish schools in their home towns. These projects were poorly publicized. The reason why is not difficult to find: when a pro-Irshadi school was founded by Shaykh 'Umar bin Muḥammad al-Shiblī in his native town of Ḥabbān in 1934, it quickly attracted some two hundred pupils. It also attracted the wrath of local *sayyids*, who were angered that a non-*sayyid* was engaging in their traditional occupation and so instigated al-Shiblī's murder several months later.[87] Despite the obvious risks of publicizing their activities, several brief reports of these schools have survived and serve to illustrate the scope of al-Irshad involvement in the homeland.

It appears that the earliest pro-Irshadi schools were established with the support of members of the organization from the Bin Ṭālib family. From 1932 Singaporean Arabic newspapers contained reports of such schools in the towns of Jafal, al-Qārah, al-Ḥawṭah and Ma'dan al-Salīl.[88] One report described the schools as "religious, moral, reformist," while according to another they provided "very very useful education," a description which suggests that the schools offered secular as well as religious subjects. By 1935 the school at Ma'dan al-Salīl, at least,

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[83] Crosby to Political Resident at Aden, February 9, 1925, R/20/A/1412, IOL.

[84] This was presumably a reference to the mission of 'Abūd.

[85] *Al-Mishkāh*, July 3, 1931, p. 4.

[86] A pro-Irshadi newspaper in Singapore expressed the same sentiment in 1932, criticizing the organization for always working in Java, a country which was not the Hadramis' own. See "Ṣiyāḥāt al-Irshādiyīn," *Al-Qiṣāṣ*, October 8, 1932, p. 1.

[87] Aden Political Intelligence Summary no. 407 (for the week ending October 31, 1934), R/20/A/1322, IOL. On al-Shiblī see also Fitzmaurice to Aden, March 12, 1934, R/20/A/3413, PRO.

[88] "Ḥaḍramawt wa'l-madāris," *Al-Qiṣāṣ*, March 25, 1932, p. 2; and "al-Madāris al-Ḥaḍramīyyah," *Al-Qiṣāṣ*, February 3, 1933, p. 6. I have not been able to locate some of these towns on a map. In the case of those for which I can find no romanised spelling, I have used an assumed transliteration which may not be correct.

had made considerable progress, boasting 250 pupils.[89] In April 1936 an al-Irshad leader from Surabaya, Shaykh 'Uthmān bin Muḥammad al-'Amūdī, was reported to be seeking support from leading Hadramis in the Hejaz for the establishment of al-Irshad schools in Hadramawt. According to the Indian vice-consul to the British Legation at Jeddah, al-'Amūdī succeeded in gaining a commitment from the Sa'ūdī government that it would supply textbooks for the schools.[90] Schools were established in the towns of Ṣubaykh and Ḥawfah around 1937 under the leadership of three graduates from the al-Irshad school in Surabaya.[91] Members of al-Irshad in the Indies were encouraged to support these schools through the donation of books and funds. At the al-Irshad jubilee congress held in Surabaya in 1939, 'Umar Hubayṣ reported that schools were functioning in the towns of Daw'an, Ṣubaykh, Qaydūn, and Jafal.[92] They were run by former members and students of the organization from the Indies. In addition, pro-Irshadi clubs and study groups operated in Shiḥr, Shibām, Ḍarā, Ḥawfah, Qaydūn, and the Tamīmī region.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Irshadis in Hadramawt, but *sayyid* predictions about their possible influence were dire. An article published in the pro-*sayyid* newspaper *Ḥaḍramawt* in 1932 argued that if al-Irshad schools were established in Hadramawt, social division leading to all-out war would be the result.[93] Similarly in 1937 *sayyids* in Say'ūn and Tarīm expressed concern to British officials about the increasing activity of Irshadis.[94] The Irshadis certainly seem to have had some success in shaking the respected position which *sayyids* had previously enjoyed. In Ḥurayḍah, the center of the al-'Aṭṭās family, for example, the British traveler Freya Stark reported that the Irshadis were responsible for a sharp decline in the number of tribesmen who visited *sayyids* to pay their respects on feast days:

> In the old days, before the young men of Java had weaned the hearts of the beduin from the Sayyids of Hureidha, a vast crowd used to pour in from the neighbouring wadis on this last day of the feast. But now it is only a poor little contingent.[95]

Her observation reinforces Ingrams's view that the principles of the Irshadis "made considerable headway" in the homeland.[96]

Although the Irshadi ideal of "equality" appears to have penetrated some quarters in Hadramawt, the Irshadi schools do not appear to have enjoyed much success. In this field, it seems that the *sayyids* were the victors of the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict in the homeland. It is significant that all of the schools were

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89 "Madrasah al-Irshād," *Al-Majd Al-'Arabī*, July 2, 1935, p. 3.

90 Ryan (Jeddah) to Reilly, April 18, 1936, CO725/35/4, PRO. I have not been able to establish whether this commitment was ever fulfilled.

91 "Al-Irshād fī Ḥaḍramawt," *Al-Murshid*, April 1938, p. 8.

92 "Maḥḍar ijtimā' yawm al-aḥd al-'umūmī," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 32.

93 "Mādhā sata'ūl ilayhi al-ḥālah," *Ḥaḍramawt*, December 12 and 15, 1932.

94 The British official noted, however, that "more responsible opinion" considered the Irshadis posed little real danger. Hadramaut Political Intelligence Summaries no. 15 (for the week ending July 10, 1937) and no. 17 (for the week ending July 24, 1937), R/20/A/5033, IOL.

95 Freya Stark, *A Winter in Arabia* (London: John Murray, 1942), p. 130.

96 Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, p. 48.

established in small towns where non-*sayyids* occupied a relatively strong social position, mainly in the Wadi Daw'an. No Irshadi schools were formed in major cities like Say'ūn or Tarīm, where *sayyids* retained their traditional dominance, although a pro-Irshadi club was reported in Shibām. Given the isolated locations of the Irshadi schools, their influence was limited. Moreover, even in Wadi Daw'an the schools faced serious opposition. There is a fleeting reference to one al-Irshad teacher being imprisoned in Wadi Daw'an, although the grounds for his imprisonment are unclear.[97] R. J. Gavin attributes this lack of Irshadi success to the actions of *sayyid* collaborators with the British, and it is true that *sayyids* who worked closely with British officials were willing to use their influence to ensure that Irshadi activities were blocked.[98] A more enlightening explanation, however, is found in a report by Ingrams on conflict aroused by the Irshadi presence in Qaydūn. According to Ingrams the returned Irshadis, who belonged mainly to the al-'Amūdī family, had antagonized local 'Amūdī shaykhs and tribesmen by their criticism of Hadrami religious beliefs and traditions.[99] In other words, the Irshadi reformists faced opposition not only from *sayyids*, but also from their fellow non-*sayyids* who still adhered to traditional Hadrami practices.

Despite these difficulties the al-Irshad jubilee congress held in Surabaya in September 1939 declared that the organization stood prepared to work to spread education and reform in the homeland.[100] Attempts would be made to establish the first branch of the organization in Hadramawt.[101] This decision represents a high point in the commitment of the Irshadis to taking their movement to Hadramawt, because al-Irshad had never previously made such a bold declaration. At the public meeting held on October 1 to announce the decisions of the congress, 'Umar Hubayṣ exhorted the Irshadis to become more active in their homeland. He declared that "our reform, and the ordering of our affairs in this region, will not be complete before the reform of our country Hadramawt."[102] After the completion of its first twenty-five years, Al-Irshad's aim in its second phase would be to "cross the ocean to the Arab lands, and in particular to Hadramawt." The Japanese occupation of the Indies during the Second World War prevented this aim from being achieved, at least in the short term.

THE SPREAD OF HADRAMI-NESS

In the Indies, the *nahḍah* was characterized by the spread of Hadrami-ness, a new sense of Hadrami identity which was conveyed through the Hadrami newspapers and schools. Did the expansion of the awakening to the homeland lead to a rise in the same spirit? At this stage it is impossible to answer this question

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[97] "Mustashār Ḥukūmatay Ḥaḍramawt fī mahjar al-Ḥaḍārim," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 1.

[98] Gavin, *Aden under British Rule*, pp. 302 and 306; Hadramaut Political Intelligence Summary no. 17 (for the week ending July 24, 1937), R/20/A/5033, IOL.

[99] Mukalla Political Intelligence Summaries no. 74 (for the week ending December 10, 1938) and no. 77 (for the week ending December 31, 1938), R/20/C/23, IOL.

[100] "Maḥḍar ijtimā' yawm al-aḥd al-'umūmī," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 33.

[101] Pijper to Governor-General, October 10, 1939, mr. 1219x/39, located in vb. December 9, 1939, no. M53, MK, ARA.

[102] "Maḥḍar ijtimā' yawm al-aḥd al-'umūmī," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 33.

conclusively. But the available evidence does allow us to observe that by the 1940s some Hadramis in the *waṭan* were keenly aware of Hadrami-ness as a modern-style nationality, that this awareness was not consistent with changes in identity in other parts of southern Arabia, and that it was consistent with developments in the Indies during the previous decades.

W. H. Ingrams, based on his experience in the 1930s, was in no doubt about the strength of Hadrami-ness. "The feeling of being a Hadhrami," he wrote, "however it is politically divided, is perhaps even more widely recognized throughout the province than that of being a Yemeni is in al-Yemen."[103] What Ingrams observed in the 1930s was perhaps little more than a primordial sense of unity among the people of one region, rather than a modern sense of a Hadrami "nation." But the shift to a more modern, political concept of Hadrami-ness occurred rapidly, at least for some Hadramis. This shift became dramatically evident in 1950, when a newly formed party, the Hizb al-Waṭanī (National Party) organized a mass protest demonstration against the appointment of a Sudanese official, rather than a Hadrami, to the position of Qu'ayṭī State Secretary.[104] Sixteen people lost their lives in a subsequent riot. The history of Hadramawt is littered with the victims of tribal conflicts, but these men were perhaps the first to die in defense of the Hadrami nation.

Ingrams had retired from service in Hadramawt by this time, but on a return visit in 1953 he was confronted directly with the new, political Hadrami-ness. In a wall newspaper at the school in Ghayl Bā Wazīr (a school which he himself had established), Ingrams read:

> We are grateful for all the Sudanese teachers have done to help us start our schools, but now we have got our first BA and can manage them ourselves and we would like to say goodbye to the Sudanese and to the British.[105]

By the mid-twentieth century, of course, nationalism was spreading rapidly throughout the Middle East. Is there any reason to assume that the rise of a Hadrami nationalism was linked to the rise of Hadrami-ness in the Indies? Here it may be useful to compare what happened in Hadramawt with developments in the rest of the Aden Protectorate. Sultan Nagi has traced the growth of "Yemeni consciousness" from the early 1930s among intellectuals in Aden.[106] This was the belief that all of southwest Arabia—the area still controlled by the Imam of Yemen, Aden, and the entire British Protectorate including Hadramawt—formed part of the greater Yemeni homeland, and should be united in one Yemeni state. Some southern tribal leaders were wary of this view, advocating instead the union of the Protectorate with Aden in an independent state. But it seems that it was only Hadramis who rejected the idea of union altogether, advocating instead their own, specifically Hadrami, nationalism. The discordance between Hadrami views and the more general "Yemeni" nationalism was captured in an exchange published in

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103 Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, p. 47.

104 Gavin, *Aden under British Rule*, p. 311; Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, p. 41.

105 Ingrams, *Arabia and the Isles*, p. 36.

106 Sultan Nagi, "The Genesis of the Call for Yemeni Unity," in *Contemporary Yemen: Politics and Historical Background*, ed. B. R. Pridham (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 240-60.

an Aden newspaper around 1948.[107] A Hadrami, using the pseudonym "Mr. Frank," wrote to the newspaper to complain about the arrogant views of the Yemenis: "what is this Yemenism that you are imposing on others? As you are proud to be Yemenis, so too we are proud to be Hadramis." Despite receiving a patronizing reply from a Yemeni leader ("you and I are true Arabs from the Yemen . . . we are brothers in descent, blood and homeland"), Mr Frank stood firm. His last article was entitled "the Hadramis today have their own nationality." Perhaps this explicit statement of Hadrami-ness echoed back to the earliest years of the *nahḍah* in the Indies.

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[107] Ibid., pp. 246-7.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HADRAMI OR INDONESIAN?

Indonesia is the homeland, Hadramawt is the land of the ancestors.[1]

On October 4, 1934 a group of forty *muwallad* Hadramis met in the central Javanese coastal town of Semarang. After three days of vigorous debate they announced the establishment of a new organization, the Persatoean Arab Indonesia (Indonesian Arab Union; PAI). The PAI aimed to unite the *muwallads*, with membership open to any Arab who had been born in Indonesia. The Semarang meeting consisted of active members of al-Irshad as well as the pro-*sayyid* organization Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah. All forty participants agreed unanimously that the basis of the new organization would be the recognition that Indonesia, not Hadramawt, was their homeland.

This proclamation set the scene for the last great conflict of the colonial period. Between 1934 and 1942 the Hadramis found themselves once again at odds over the fundamental question of who they were. This time the conflict was not between religious and ethnic identity, nor between competing visions of Hadrami-ness. Rather, it involved a previously unasked question: were the *muwallads* Hadrami after all, or did they belong to the aspiring nation of Indonesia? The battle between Hadrami-ness and Indonesian-ness revealed a new division in the community. The conflict between Irshadis and *sayyids* was quietly set to one side as al-Irshad and Al-Rābiṭah, both Hadramawt-oriented parties, joined forces to combat their former supporters in the new upstart, PAI.

EARLY *MUWALLAD* ORGANIZATIONS

The Hadrami community in the Indies consisted of two distinct groups: the "pure-blooded" first generation migrants from Hadramawt, and their Indies-born descendants who, due to the fact that Hadrami women virtually never migrated, were inevitably of mixed descent. The Hadramis used Arabic terms to distinguish between these two groups: *aqḥāḥ* or *wulāyatī* (pure-blooded) for the first generation migrants, and *muwallad* (Indies-born) for their offspring. By 1886, when van den Berg published his report on the Hadramis in the Indies, the social differentiation between the first-generation migrants and the Indies-born was sufficient for him to

[1] "Conferentie Peranakan Arab Indonesia," *Pewarta Arab*, October 3, 1934 [*sic*], p. 2.

devote an entire chapter to the "half-caste Arabs."[2] He found that many *muwallads* spoke only broken Arabic or no Arabic at all, and lacked the industriousness and business acumen of their forebears.[3] In almost every Hadrami settlement the first generation migrants possessed higher prestige, were more sought after as business partners, commanded better salaries, and were considered more cultured than the Indies-born.[4] Similarly, Snouck Hurgronje observed in 1901 that the government was unable to appoint a *muwallad* as the Arab *kapitein* in Batavia, because any such candidate would lack authority among the "pure" Hadramis.[5]

What had become of the *aqḥāḥ-muwallad* distinction between the turn of the century and the 1930s? Generally speaking, the Hadrami *nahḍah* appears to have lessened the social distance between these two components of the Hadrami community. This occurred in several ways. First, the new spirit of patriotism which accompanied the Hadrami awakening affected *aqḥāh* and *muwallad* alike. All members of the community became united by the sense of belonging to a shared homeland; a spirit which led, as we saw in the previous chapter, to involvement by both groups in the reform of Hadramawt in the 1930s. Secondly, the spread of modern Arabic schools which was a feature of the *nahḍah* provided many *muwallad* youths with the opportunity to learn to speak Arabic fluently, an important factor in the "re-Arab-ization" of the *muwallads*. Thirdly, *aqḥāh* and *muwallad* worked together in the voluntary associations which were established from 1901 onwards.

Al-Irshad, as we have seen, was led by men of both groups, with Indies-born sons often replacing their Hadramawt-born fathers in leadership positions. Similarly Jam'īyyah Khayr and the later pro-*sayyid* organization, al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah, both received support from Hadramawt-born as well as locally born Hadramis. This observation points to the final factor in reducing the *aqḥāh-muwallad* divide: since the split between al-Irshad and the *sayyids* in 1914, it had been taken for granted that the fundamental issue which united or divided one Hadrami from another was his stance in the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict. As the distinction between Irshadis and *sayyids* hardened, both *aqḥāh* and *muwallad* felt that they had more in common with their fellow Irshadis or 'Alawi than they did with their *aqḥāḥ* or *muwallad* counterparts on the opposing side.

Despite the narrowing of the gap between *aqḥāh* and *muwallad*, however, there was always an undercurrent among some *muwallads*—generally those whose families were long established in the Indies, and whose links with Hadramawt were weakest—who supported the establishment of *muwallad*-only organizations. Probably the first of these was Murā'ātu'l-Ikhwān (Respect for Brothers). Established in Surabaya around 1913, the organization aimed to promote mutual support among the Indies-born Hadramis.[6] Letters sent by its members to the Malay

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[2] L. W. C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia: Imprimerie du Gouvernement, 1886), part 2, chapter 8.

[3] Ibid., pp. 213-15.

[4] Ibid., p. 229.

[5] *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936*, ed. E. Gobee and C. Adriaanse (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), vol. 2, p. 1557. Division between *aqḥāḥ* and *muwallad* was reinforced by colonial law, according to which Hadramis born in the Indies were Dutch subjects, while those born elsewhere were not.

[6] S. L. van der Wal, ed., *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indie* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1967), p. 199; Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en

newspaper *Oetoesan Hindia* show that they possessed a keen sense of the low status of the *muwallads*, and hoped to improve their lot by uniting into one organization.[7] For the majority, however, it appears to have been primarily a social club. It has even been suggested that the organization had no aim beyond "getting together and having fun playing dominoes, billiards, chess and so forth."[8]

Other *muwallad* organizations—invariably small and locally based—followed in the 1920s. In 1924, for example, an organization was established in Surabaya which aimed to unite young *muwallads* from both sides of the 'Alawi-Irshadi divide. Jam'iyyah al-Tahdhībiyyah (Educational Organization) sought "to work to raise the social position of the Indies Arabs, by setting aside all party-feelings."[9] Sayyid Hoesin Bafagieh, one of its supporters, recalled its foundation this way:

> At that time there arose among the youth of al-Irshad and al-Rabitah a spirit of opposition towards the older generation, who continuously formed an obstacle to them achieving their aims of progress . . . so several youth from al-Irshad and several youth from Al-Rabitah made a kind of "union" which gave birth to an organization named "Bibliotheek Attahdibijah" in Surabaya, just as a place where they could associate and make their relationship closer.[10]

Membership was open to any Muslim living in Surabaya, but the organization was dominated by *muwallads*.[11] Its early achievements included the establishment of a library and the publication of a bi-monthly periodical, significantly titled *Zaman Baroe* (New Era).[12] Al-Tahdhībiyyah was followed in 1926 by the establishment of a similar organization in Batavia under the name Shubbān al-'Arab (Arab Youth).[13] As a youth organization, Shubbān al-'Arab too was dominated by *muwallads*. It aimed "to create a spirit of solidarity and unity among the [Arab] youth of this region, and to endeavor as far as possible to raise their educational and cultural standard."[14] The latter aim was to be achieved by establishing a library, holding lectures, and running courses for members.

The formation of *muwallad* organizations did not go unchallenged. Both Shubbān al-'Arab and al-Tahdhībiyyah were accused of creating an artificial

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Literatuur," *Overdruk uit de Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 58 (1920), p. 202; and *Al-Mahdjar*, August 1928.

[7] *Oetoesan Hindia*, December 21 and 24, 1921, as cited in *IPO* 52 (1921).

[8] Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan: Karya dan Pengabdiannya* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1989), p. 54.

[9] *Zaman Baroe*, April 5, 1926, as cited in *IPO* 16 (1926).

[10] "Didalam dan diloear pergerakan," *Aliran Baroe*, January 1939, pp. 1-2.

[11] Husain Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab dalam Pergerakan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (1900-1942)" (PhD dissertation, Universitas Indonesia, 1986), p. 426.

[12] *Zaman Baroe*, April 5, 1926, as cited in *IPO* 16 (1926); and *Kemadjoean Hindia*, August 1924, as cited in *IPO* 33 (1924).

[13] *Zaman Baroe*, May 20, 1926, as cited in *IPO* 24 (1926). These organizations can be compared to other ethnically based youth organizations established around the same period, such as Jong Java (Young Java) and Jong Minahasa (Young Minahasa).

[14] "Al-ijtimā' al-sanawī li-jam'iyyah Shubbān al-'Arab," *Al-Ma'ārif*, May 26, 1927, p. 3.

division in the Hadrami community by separating sons from their fathers.[15] Perhaps it was because of pressure from their elders on either side of the 'Alawi-Irshadi divide that, within a few years, al-Tahdhībiyyah had collapsed and Shubbān al-'Arab fell into inactivity.[16] Symbolic of their failure to achieve their purpose is the fact that the former co-editors of *Zaman Baroe*, Hoesin Bafagieh and Salim Maskati, went on to edit, respectively, the pro-'Alawi paper *Al-Mahdjar* (The Settlement) and the pro-Irshadi *Lembaga Baroe* (New Institution), two periodicals which opposed each other "like oil and water."[17]

Nevertheless, small *muwallad* organizations continued to exist, and formed the basis for the next attempt to unite *muwallads*. Largely at the initiative of Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-'Amūdī, a young and energetic *muwallad* from Ambon, a committee was formed in Surabaya late in 1929 with the aim of establishing an Arab Union in the Indies.[18] Following extensive propaganda efforts undertaken by al-'Amūdī in various cities of Java, an Arab congress was held to inaugurate the new body in Surabaya in December 1930.[19]

Although al-'Amūdī had promoted the idea of a single union, the congress in fact led to the formation of two separate bodies: the Arabische Verbond (Arab Union; AV), a federation of all Arab organizations in the Indies, and the Indo-Arabisch Verbond (Indo-Arab Union; IAV), a federation restricted to *muwallad* organizations (the only member named by the sources is Murā'ātu'l-Ikhwān, which was the first to join). This separation was apparently the result of lobbying by several small *muwallad* organizations who argued that a *muwallad*-only federation was essential if the Hadramis were to embark on political activities; after all, those born in Hadramawt were not Dutch subjects, and hence were not legally permitted to join political organizations.[20] Its practical effect, however, was to enable small *muwallad* organizations to play a leading role in the IAV in the absence of the larger, mixed associations such as al-Irshad and Al-Rābiṭah.

The separate existence of the IAV attracted predictable criticism. The 'Alawi newspaper *Ḥaḍramawt* declared that no good could come from such a body. It would only serve to "divide brother from brother, separate father from son, and alienate grandfather from grandson."[21] A spate of articles appearing in the ensuing months concurred: the existence of a separate federation for *muwallad* organizations was divisive and unnecessary.[22]

By September 1931 the IAV was struggling to maintain its momentum, and plans were announced to change the IAV from a federation of organizations into a union of individual members in a bid to gain a wider support base.[23] By the time the

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[15] *Zaman Baroe*, April 5, 1926, as cited in *IPO* 16 (1926).

[16] *Al-Mahdjar*, August 1928.

[17] "Didalam dan diloear pergerakan," p. 2.

[18] "Lajnah al-Waḥdah al-'Arabīyyah," *Al-Dahnā'*, mid-September 1929, p. 45.

[19] Van der Plas, report on the congress of the Indo Arabisch Verbond, enclosure in Gobee to Governor-General, January 9, 1931, mr. 121/31, MK, ARA.

[20] Ch. O. van der Plas, "De Arabische Gemeente Ontwaakt," *Koloniaal Tijdschrift* 20 (1931): 183.

[21] "Al-Waḥdah al-'Arabīyyah wa mā huwa al-gharaḍ min al-di'āyah ilayhā?," *Ḥaḍramawt*, January 5, 1931, p. 1.

[22] See for example *Ḥaḍramawt*, January 19, 1931; January 26, 1931; and April 27, 1931.

[23] *Al-Jaum*, September 23, 1931, p. 1.

new constitution was approved, however, almost a full year later, the organization was virtually moribund.[24] The new-style IAV managed to form a few branches, but the organization had effectively expired; nothing was heard of it in the Arab press after 1932. Most observers, including members of the IAV itself, blamed its demise on al-'Amūdī. The founder of the organization was said to have been motivated purely by the desire to gain fame as an Arab leader in order to receive appointment by the colonial government to the Volksraad. When he was passed over as a Volksraad member, he lost interest in the organization.[25] An equally important factor in the demise of the IAV, however, must be the fact that the conflict over the *sayyid* title erupted shortly after its establishment. In May 1931, less than six months after the Surabaya Arab congress, the al-Irshad congress in Batavia passed its famous resolution stating that the word *"sayyid"* could be applied to any respectable person. The vehement debate which ensued rallied Irshadis and *sayyids* to their respective parties, and reinforced the view that the community was fundamentally split along 'Alawi-Irshadi lines.

By the end of 1931 the prospects for *muwallad* unity seemed remote. Nevertheless, the formation of *muwallad* organizations like Murā'ātu'l-Ikhwān, al-Tahdhībīyyah, and Shubbān al-'Arab—and ultimately the IAV itself—had proven that it was possible to bring together at least some *muwallads* by appealing to their collective interests. The Arab congress of 1930 showed that on certain issues, such as access to Dutch-language education and representation of the Hadramis in the Volksraad and municipal councils, there was widespread agreement between *muwallads*. If disaffected elements in the major Hadrami parties could be convinced that they shared more with each other than they did with the *aqḥāḥ* Hadramis, then the potential existed for a significant *muwallad* organization. It was this knowledge which provided the impetus for Abdurrahman Baswedan, the future founder of the PAI, to launch his proposals for a new kind of *muwallad* party in 1934.

ABDURRAHMAN BASWEDAN

Abdurrahman Baswedan was a young *muwallad* from Surabaya. Born in 1908 to a non-*sayyid* family, he received his early education under Shaykh Aḥmad Sūrkatī at the al-Irshad school in Batavia. He also studied with Sayyid Muḥammad bin Hāshim at the Hadramawt School in Surabaya, where pro-*sayyid* customs such as the kissing of hands were maintained.[26] This mixed educational experience may have been influential in shaping his views about the unity of the *muwallads*. In the late 1920s he became active in the Surabaya branch of al-Irshad, but he resigned from his position on the executive of its youth wing in June 1930, apparently due to differences over the operation of al-Irshad schools.[27] Baswedan was an active supporter of the IAV, and served on the committee which

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[24] *Soeara Oemoem*, September 6, 1932, as cited in *IPO* 37 (1932).

[25] *Matahari*, August 13, 1934, as cited in *IPO* 33 (1934); and de Vries to Governor-General, December 17, 1939, mr. 233x/39, MK, ARA.

[26] A. R. Baswedan, *Beberapa Catatan tentang Sumpah Pemuda Indonesia Keturunan Arab (1934): Suatu Revolusi Fikiran* (Surabaya: Penerbit "Pers Nasional," n.d.), p. 5.

[27] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," pp. 365-71; Hussein Badjerei, "15 Syawwal: 69 tahun yang lalu," *Suara al-Irsyad* 11,2 (July 1981), p. 6; and "Didalam dan diloear pergerakan," p. 2.

rewrote its constitution in mid-1932.[28] Like many others, he later grew disillusioned with its leader al-'Amūdī.[29] A talented writer in both Malay and Arabic, he embarked on a career in journalism in 1932, working on the Chinese-Malay *Sin Tit Po* and the Indonesian nationalist newspaper *Soeara Oemoem*.[30]

Baswedan laid the groundwork for the Persatoean Arab Indonesia in two articles which appeared in the Chinese-Malay newspaper *Matahari* in August 1934. In "*Peranakan* and *Totok* Arabs," Baswedan attempted a sociological description of the Hadrami community in the Indies.[31] He argued that the Hadramis, like the immigrant Chinese, were divided into two main groups, which he labeled as *totok* (newcomers, i.e. Hadramawt born) and *peranakan* (Indies born). Between these two groups, he claimed, there had always existed a mutual antipathy. Baswedan recalled that as a child, he and his *peranakan* friends used to tease the *totok* Arabs in the street, while *totok* parents ridiculed their children with the words, "but you're only a *peranakan*." In Baswedan's view, the social distance between these two groups was a result of the differing conditions of their respective places of birth. Children born in Hadramawt were educated very early in the harshness of life. The difficult physical conditions of the country, coupled with the frequent outbreak of tribal conflict, taught young men to be brave, tough, persevering, and frugal. "A *totok* Arab is like a Spartan in ancient times, when people were taught to be hard and militant."[32] The *peranakans* born in the Indies, on the other hand, grew up in very different circumstances. The ease of life in the Indies, and the ready availability of food and water, taught a *peranakan* to enjoy the pleasures of life as he found them, without worrying about the future. "From the time he is small he tastes the sweetness of honey more than the bitterness of *tjadam* [a traditional laxative], feels things that are soft more than things that are hard."[33]

According to Baswedan, the expansion of Arabic schools in the previous decade, and the custom of sending *peranakan* children back to Hadramawt to be educated, had served to lessen the alienation between the two groups of Hadramis. Nevertheless, he felt, the day was fast approaching when "fate" would force the *totoks* to separate from the *peranakans* once and for all. This conclusion was explained in his second article which appeared under the title "The *Peranakan* Arabs are beside the Indonesians and Babas [Indies Chinese]."[34] Here Baswedan proposed a new organization, membership of which would be restricted to the *peranakan* Arabs. The organization would be based on the recognition of Indonesia as the land of their birth, to which they owed a debt of loyalty and love. Such an organization would enable the *peranakans* to take their place beside the Indonesians and Baba Chinese (hence the title of the article), working for the good of their shared country. This act of recognizing Indonesia as their homeland was

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[28] *Sin Tit Po*, August 6, 1932, as cited in *IPO* 32 (1932).

[29] *Matahari*, August 13, 1934, as cited in *IPO* 33 (1934).

[30] Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan*, pp. 84-91.

[31] "Peranakan Arab dan Totoknja," *Insaf*, February-March 1940, pp. 8-12 (reprint from *Matahari*, August 1, 1934).

[32] Ibid., p. 10.

[33] Ibid., p. 11. *Tjadam*, or *jadam*, is a strong laxative made from the *gaharu* tree.

[34] *Matahari*, August 13, 1934, as cited in *IPO* 33 (1934).

the "fate" which Baswedan had predicted would ultimately sever the *peranakans* from the *totoks*.

The views Baswedan expressed in these articles differed significantly from those he had adopted previously. In 1929 he had written in support of the establishment of a new organization for Arab youth in the pro-Irshadi paper *Lembaga Baroe*. In that article he stated categorically that the new organization should not be restricted to Indo-Arabs, because then it would only create a new division in the Arab community.[35] In 1930, it is said, Baswedan was so far from standing "beside the Indonesians" that he forced Indonesian musicians performing at the Arab congress to wear *tarboosh* (fez) instead of the Indonesian *peci*, so that they would appear to be Arabs.[36] Significantly, the dramatic change in Baswedan's thinking in the early 1930s mirrors the change which was occurring in the Indies Chinese community at the same time. In this period we see a repetition of the pattern which emerged in the early years of the century, when the sense of identity expressed by leading Hadramis was shaped by changing modes of identification among the Indies Chinese.

Baswedan's articles were influenced by Indies Chinese thinking in at least two ways. First, his usage of the Malay terms *totok* and *peranakan* was adopted directly from the Chinese, who had long utilized these terms to describe the fundamental socio-cultural division within their own community.[37] Baswedan's use of these terms instead of the more conventional *aqḥāḥ* and *muwallad* was provocative. Within the Chinese community, the division between *totok* and *peranakan* revealed a deep social and political cleavage. Among the Hadramis, on the other hand, whose settlement in the Indies was more recent, the *aqḥāḥ-muwallad* distinction had never been as pronounced.[38] In the twentieth century, as we have seen, the gap had narrowed further with the impact of the Hadrami *nahḍah*. Baswedan's adoption of the terms *totok* and *peranakan*, and the comparison which it implied with the Chinese, therefore suggested a greater degree of social and political division among the Hadramis than had previously been acknowledged. In other words, his new vision of the Hadrami community used *totok-peranakan* in place of 'Alawi-Irshadi as the fundamental dividing line within the community.

Secondly, in arguing that Indonesia was the homeland of *peranakan* Arabs, Baswedan appears to have been influenced by a group of *peranakan* Chinese who had acknowledged Indonesia as their own homeland since the late 1920s. A crucial factor in Baswedan's change of heart may well have been his close relationship with Liem Koen Hian, a *peranakan* Chinese journalist with whom he worked on *Sin Tit Po*.[39] Born in south Kalimantan in 1896, Liem was an ardent Chinese nationalist in his youth. From the late 1920s, however, he began to promote the

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[35] *Lembaga Baroe*, July 10, 1929, pp. 3-5.

[36] "Didalam dan diloear pergerakan," p. 3.

[37] Charles A. Coppel, "Mapping the *Peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 8 (September 1973): 143-7.

[38] The difference between the Chinese and Hadramis in this respect is illustrated by the fact that several authors have written about *peranakan* Chinese politics. See, for example, Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1976). To analyze specifically *muwallad* politics would barely be feasible.

[39] Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan*, pp. 85-8.

notion that the homeland of the *peranakans* was the Indies, to which they owed responsibilities as citizens. In September 1932 Liem was chosen as the president of a *peranakan* Chinese party, the Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (Indonesian Chinese Party; PTI), which recognized the Indies as the homeland of the *peranakan* Chinese and vowed to cooperate with the Indonesian parties in the nationalist struggle.[40] Given Baswedan's close links with Liem, it seems likely that Liem's ideas were an important influence upon his own, and that the PTI was a model for the PAI which Baswedan founded two years later.[41]

Baswedan's articles provoked a heated response.[42] He was accused, like the founders of al-Tahdhībīyyah and the IAV before him, of seeking to drive a wedge between Hadrami fathers and their sons. Many Hadramis denied that a *totok-peranakan* cleavage existed in their community, and accused Baswedan of attempting to create one for his own purposes.[43] This hostility to the notion of *totok* and *peranakan* Hadramis was long-lived: as late as 1939, one writer still described the *totoks* as "a group created in the imagination."[44]

Baswedan's articles touched on the very issue of Hadrami identity which had been at the core of the Hadrami awakening. He implied what the previous *muwallad* organizations had not, that the *muwallads* did not belong to the Hadrami *waṭan* at all. He suggested that the *peranakans* had more in common with the Indonesians and Baba Chinese than they did with the *totok* Hadramis: they shared a common homeland in Indonesia.[45] He seemed to suggest that the *peranakans* were Indonesians and not Arabs, an impression which was supported by the controversial publication, on September 1, 1934, of a photograph of Baswedan dressed in traditional Javanese costume.[46] As a result he was accused not only of promoting division, but of seeking to destroy the nationality of the Hadramis.[47] During the coming years the same criticism was to be hurled repeatedly at the organization which was formed in the wake of Baswedan's articles, the Persatoean Arab Indonesia.

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[40] Leo Suryadinata, "The Search for National Identity of an Indonesian Chinese: A Political Biography of Liem Koen Hian," *Archipel* 14 (1977): 43-70; and Leo Suryadinata, "Pre-War Indonesian Nationalism and the Peranakan Chinese," *Indonesia* 11 (April 1971): 87.

[41] This conclusion seems inescapable, despite the fact that Baswedan himself played down Liem's influence. See his comments in Baswedan, *Beberapa Catatan*, pp. 17-18.

[42] "Tjatatan dari masa kelahiran P.A.I.," *Insaf*, January 1940, pp. 12-13.

[43] See the editor's note at the end of "Peranakan Arab dan Totoknja," p. 12. For similar criticism of the previous organizations, see *Zaman Baroe*, April 5, 1926, as cited in *IPO* 16 (1926).

[44] Sardjan, *Kepentingan Palestina bagi Oemmat Islam dan Bangsa Timoer Oemoemnya* (Batavia: Mohammad Sahak, 1939), p. 27.

[45] It is worth noting that Baswedan was not the first to express the idea of Indonesia as the homeland of the Indies-born. Within limited circles the notion was in the air. An article published in *Pewarta Arab* in December 1933, for example, had already asserted that the homeland of the *muwallads* was "the beautiful Indonesia." "Kita dan tanah leloehoer kita Hadramaut," *Pewarta Arab*, December 11, 1933, p. 5.

[46] "Tjatatan dari masa kelahiran P.A.I.," p. 12.

[47] Ibid.

PERSATOEAN ARAB INDONESIA

The response to Baswedan's *Matahari* articles was not altogether hostile. Among those who spoke out in his support were Salim Maskati, the former editor of *Zaman Baroe*, and Sayyid Nuh al-Kaf, editor of the Semarang-based weekly, *Pewarta Arab* (Arab Reporter).[48] Al-Kaf probably wrote the anonymous article which appeared in his paper on September 5 extending a hand to Baswedan "for the sake of *peranakan* unity."[49] Heartened by the signs of receptivity, Baswedan soon proposed a conference to discuss the establishment of the new *peranakan* organization.[50] This conference was held in Semarang in October 1934. It was attended by about forty people, including active supporters of both Al-Rābiṭah and al-Irshad.[51] In Baswedan's words, those who attended were the "motors" of the warring Hadrami parties.[52] Despite their differences, the participants agreed unanimously to Baswedan's proposal for a new organization, the Persatoean Arab Indonesia. Membership in the PAI was restricted to Arabs born in the Indies, although Arabs born elsewhere were admitted as extraordinary members.

The initial executive of the PAI reflected the diverse backgrounds of the conference participants. It comprised five office-bearers: Abdurrahman Baswedan (chairman), Nuh al-Kaf (first secretary), Salim Maskati (second secretary), Segaff Assegaff (treasurer), and Abdoerrahim Argoebi (commissioner). Baswedan, Maskati, and Argoebi had all been active in al-Irshad, while Al-Kaf and Assegaff were *sayyids* and supporters of Al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah. The latter two had held offices in the Committee for the Defense of Sayyids established in 1931.[53] Indeed, as recently as December 1933, al-Kaf had accepted the position of chairman in the Semarang section of a new committee to defend the rights of *sayyids*.[54] The PAI was established, therefore, by those who had lately been enemies in the conflict over the *sayyid* title. The same precarious act of balancing Irshadis and *sayyids* was replicated at the branch level of the organization.[55]

This widespread change of heart, although surprising, was not as sudden as it may appear. Many of the PAI's founders had been involved in the failed *muwallad* organizations of the 1920s as well as the IAV, where friendships between *muwallads* of both sides had been fostered. We would do well to recall Hoesin Bafagieh's comment that, even when they were the editors of opposing newspapers, "Salim Maskatie and I went walking together every night."[56] Although the conflict over the *sayyid* title had divided them, their passion for that issue had waned. On both sides, it appears that there were several younger members who saw little point in continuing such an interminable conflict, and were

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[48] Ibid., p. 13.

[49] *Pewarta Arab*, September 5, 1934, p. 2.

[50] Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan*, pp. 56-62.

[51] "Conferentie Peranakan Arab Indonesia," p. 2.

[52] Baswedan, *Beberapa Catatan*, p. 12.

[53] "Lajnah al-difa' al-far'īyyah bi-Sūrābāyā," *Ḥaḍramawt*, year 9, no. 298, [date?] p. 3.

[54] *Pewarta Arab*, December 11, 1933, p. 2.

[55] The initial executives of the Surabaya and Batavia branches, respectively, can be found in *Sin Tit Po*, November 16, 1934, as cited in *IPO* 49 (1934); and *Bintang Timoer*, June 11, 1935, as cited in *IPO* 24 (1935).

[56] "Didalam dan diloear pergerakan," p. 2.

more interested in issues on which there was bi-partisan agreement, such as the continued modernization of education. These younger members had already come to the fore at the 'Alawi congress held earlier in 1934, where young *sayyids* succeeded in pushing through a resolution against pursuing the title issue any further.[57] What Baswedan provided the disaffected *muwallads* from both sides, by highlighting the differences between *peranakans* and *totoks*, was a way of seeing themselves which overcame the 'Alawi-Irshadi divide.

The principles on which the PAI was based were outlined in the first communiqué issued by its executive:

> The Persatoean Arab Indonesia uses Islam as its basis [and]:
> (a) determines and acknowledges that the homeland of the *peranakan* Arabs is Indonesia;
> (b) Hadramawt is acknowledged as the land of the ancestors;
> (c) the Arabic language should be used as the language of Islam, so it must be emphasized like the Indonesian language;
> (d) in view of (a), the *peranakan* Arabs must, so far as they are able, fulfill their duties towards their homeland Indonesia and its society;
> (e) in view of (d), in order that they can fulfill their obligation, the *peranakan* Arabs should improve their position and lot in social, economic and political matters within the context of the laws of the land;
> (f) the culture of the *peranakan* Arabs is Indonesian culture, to the extent that it is not in conflict with Islam;
> (g) in view of (f), in order to protect the health of the said Indonesian culture, the *peranakan* Arabs should work to spread the Islamic religion as widely as possible;
> (h) to achieve all that is mentioned above, it is vital to have a healthy unitary organization.[58]

The communiqué went on to specify the preconditions for genuine unity as follows: non-involvement in the conflict over the title "*sayyid*," mutual respect among members, the establishment of a propaganda commission, and non-involvement in conflict between the different Arab parties. The last provision was an oblique reference to the 'Alawi-Irshadi conflict; its inclusion reflected an awareness that a revival of that conflict could destroy the new-found unity of the *muwallads*, as it had in the case of the IAV.

This declaration is remarkable as a self-conscious redefinition of the identity of the *muwallad* Hadramis. Far more explicit than Baswedan's *Matahari* articles, it stated not only that the *muwallads* were Indonesian in a political sense, but also that their culture was Indonesian culture. The founders of the PAI therefore rejected any possibility of the Hadramis retaining a distinctive cultural identity of their own. Their relegation of Hadramawt to the position of "land of the ancestors" was a direct challenge to the view of Hadramawt as the "beloved

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[57] This congress was discussed in chapter five. See also Gobee to Governor-General, April 7, 1934, enclosing a report on the congress by Ḥusayn Bāmashmūs, mr. 511x/34, MK, ARA.

[58] "Persatoean Arab Indonesia: Officiel communique dari Hoofdbestuur PAI," *Pewarta Arab*, October 17, 1934, p. 1.

homeland" which had prevailed among Irshadis and 'Alawi up to this point, and which continued to inspire reformist activity by both sides in Hadramawt.

This sudden conversion from "Hadrami-ness" to "Indonesian-ness" requires closer examination. Throughout the 1930s, and indeed for the rest of his life, Baswedan stressed the significance of the proclamation issued by the Semarang congress. He declared October 4, the first day of the congress, to be "Consciousness Day" (*Hari Kesadaran*) for the *muwallad* Hadramis. Every year PAI branches throughout the Indies held festivities to celebrate their collective coming to consciousness, and the program included the reading-out of a message composed for the occasion by Baswedan himself.[59] At the same time, however, it can be said that the basis for the proclamation had been laid over the previous twenty years. *Waṭanīyyah*, the view that the Hadramis had a homeland to which they owed loyalty, had been a central theme of the *nahḍah* from its early days. As Baswedan observed, he and his colleagues had been taught to love their homeland since they were children. Their parents had told them the meaning of homeland, *waṭan, tanah air*. At school they were taught songs and poems which called on them to love and defend their homeland, and they learned that Islam requires love for the homeland as part of faith.[60] The founders of the PAI did not deviate from this view that identity was centered on homeland. They differed from their fathers because they recognized a different place as their homeland. Indonesia and not far-off Arabia was their *waṭan*. Once they knew where their *waṭan* was, they also knew how they should act towards it, *because their fathers had taught them.*

This last point may be made clearer in the light of an explanation by Liem Koen Hian of his own "conversion," which was equally rapid, from Chinese to Indonesian nationalism. When he was accused of betraying his previous beliefs, Liem replied:

> Previously I called myself a Chinese nationalist . . . [now] I call myself an Indonesian nationalist. It does not mean that I have changed my political conviction, I have merely changed its object . . . the content of my conviction has not changed, for the content of Chinese nationalism is identical to Indonesian nationalism.[61]

In the same way, it may be said that the *muwallads* who transferred their loyalties from Hadramawt to Indonesia did not challenge the paradigm of *waṭanīyyah*. They changed the object of their loyalty, but not the basis on which that loyalty was given.

The initial growth of the PAI was slow, although, given the history of previous *muwallad* organizations, the fact that it remained a united body can be viewed as an achievement in itself. No figures are available for the number of PAI members, but the number of branches provides a rough means for gauging the degree of support for the movement. At its first congress, held in Pekalongan in January 1936, the organization had formed just six branches, by far the most active of which were in Batavia and Surabaya. The second PAI congress, held in Surabaya in March 1937, represented ten branches. This number had increased to sixteen by the

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[59] See, for example, "Pidato Ketoea Pengoeroes Besar PAI," *Insaf*, October 1937, p. 151.

[60] Ibid., pp. 153-4.

[61] Cited in Suryadinata, "The Search for National Identity," p. 53.

third congress, which was held in Semarang in April 1938.[62] Nine of these branches were in Java, with the remainder located in the scattered Hadrami settlements in Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Ternate. From that year expansion was rapid. The organization boasted twenty-seven branches in January 1939 and thirty-eight in January 1940.[63] By August 1941 there were PAI branches in forty-five cities and towns in Java and the Outer Islands; in comparison, it should be recalled that al-Irshad had about thirty-one branches in 1942.[64] While the number of members per branch may vary, these figures suggest that the PAI received wide support among *muwallads*.

RESPONSE OF INDONESIAN NATIONALISTS

It was one thing for Baswedan and his colleagues to proclaim that Indonesia was their homeland. For their proclamation to be acknowledged by Indonesian nationalists, however, was quite another. The PAI was formed at a time of considerable Indonesian hostility towards the Hadramis. Resentment of the economic role played by the "foreign" Hadramis was combined with contempt for the religious conservatism identified with the *sayyids* to produce a stereotypical view of the Hadramis as grasping, miserly, deceitful in business, and fanatical.[65] The nationalist leader Sartono spoke out publicly against Hadrami money-lenders in 1929,[66] while in 1935 Sukarno—the future first president of Indonesia—coined the term "Hadramaut-ism" to encapsulate everything he felt was backward and wrong with Islam in the Indies.[67] Hostility could be found even among Islamic leaders. In 1924 a congress of Indonesian Islamic organizations decided in principle not to include any Arabs on the Indonesian delegation to the caliphate congress to be held in Cairo. The rationale behind this decision was that Arabs would be represented at the congress by delegations from the Arabian peninsula. The implication was that Arabs did not belong in the Indies Muslim community.[68]

At the other end of the socio-economic spectrum, there are reports of anti-Hadrami feeling among peasants in west Sumatra and Java. In 1927 a Dutch official related a conversation with a worker in Batavia who complained that the Hadrami traders lived off usury and sought to harm the indigenous population. "A Hadrami . . . is a bad man, who we wouldn't marry our daughter to."[69] A popular story told in Java traced the origins of the Hadramis to a couple who once invited the Prophet to dinner but, too miserly to kill one of their own goats, attempted to deceive him by serving dog meat instead. Muḥammad discovered their ruse and

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62 "Mendjelang congress PAI ke-tiga," *Insaf*, March 1938, p. 33.

63 *Insaf*, January 1939, p. 1; and *Insaf*, January 1940, p. 1.

64 *Insaf*, August 1941, p. 1.

65 "Anti Arab di Indonesia," *Aliran Baroe*, November 1938, p. 80.

66 Van der Plas, "De Arabische Gemeente Ontwaakt," p. 178.

67 Sukarno, *Under the Banner of Revolution* (Jakarta: Publication Committee, 1966), pp. 313, 325, and 327.

68 R. A. Kern, report on the extraordinary Al-Islam congress, January 29, 1925, R. A. Kern Collection, KITLV.

69 B. Th. Brondgeest, "Een zonderlinge appreciatie der Hadramieten bij een deel der Bataviaansche bevolking," *De Indische Gids* 49,2 (1927): 647.

banished them from the holy land to a country where they would always be close to death, that is, to Hadramawt.[70]

The Hadramis were keenly aware of this ill feeling, one Hadrami leader commenting wryly to the Dutch official Ch. O. van der Plas in 1931: "If the Dutch should ever leave, they [the Indonesians] will put us on the next boat."[71] Against this background, how did Indonesians respond to the formation of the PAI? The organization was greeted cautiously in the Indonesian press. One contributor to the newspaper *Oetoesan Indonesia* welcomed the PAI, but observed that only time would show whether the organization was a friend or foe to the Indonesians.[72] Most Indonesian leaders appear to have adopted a similar "wait-and-see" attitude, although several—including Dr. Soetomo, leader of the Persatoean Bangsa Indonesia (Indonesian People's Union), with whom Baswedan had worked at the *Soeara Oemoem*, and the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia leader Soerowijono—did accept invitations from the PAI Surabaya branch to address its meetings, a thoughtful tactic used by the PAI to improve relations with prominent Indonesians.[73]

Broader acceptance of the PAI came only after the organization began to prove its "Indonesian" credentials by becoming active in the nationalist movement. The first step was taken at the 1937 PAI congress in Surabaya, where the appointed Arab representative in the Volksraad, Sayyid 'Abdullāh bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās, argued that the PAI could only promote the interests of the Indonesian people through political activities.[74] The congress adopted the political program which al-'Aṭṭās proposed, one which allied the organization with the more conservative wing of the nationalist movement, by seeking Indonesian autonomy within a union with Holland:

> The Persatoean Arab Indonesia has the same ideal as that held by the Indonesian people, aiming at an independent Indonesia. But the PAI, which acknowledges the authority of the Netherlands at this time, agrees with the course of those Indonesian people who aim at the achievement of an equal position with the Netherlands, as a country and people which governs itself within a union with the Netherlands, as is intended by the Soetardjo petition.[75]

From this time onwards the PAI became increasingly active in Indonesian political life. The organization publicly expressed its agreement with the

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[70] Ibid., pp. 647-8. The story is indicative of powerful hostility towards the Hadramis, to whom it imputes extreme greed and religious hypocrisy. Dog meat, of course, is prohibited to Muslims on the grounds that it is unclean.

[71] Ch. O. van der Plas, report on the Congress of the Indo-Arabisch Verbond, January 3, 1931, mr. 121/31, MK, ARA.

[72] *Oetoesan Indonesia*, January 10, 1935, as cited in *IPO* 3 (1935).

[73] *Soeara Oemoem*, September 28, 1935, and *Sin Tit Po*, September 4, 1935, both cited in *IPO* 41 (1935).

[74] "Pidato Toean A. S. Alatas, Adviseur PAI," *Insaf*, May 1937, p. 78. It may be recalled that al-'Aṭṭās had been a teacher in several early al-Irshad schools.

[75] "Politiek Program PAI," *Insaf*, April 1937, p. 59. Ḥusayn Bāmashmūs' report on the congress can be found as an attachment to Pijper to Governor-General, May 7, 1937, mr. 463x/37, in vb. December 8, 1939, no. 8, MK, ARA.

Soetardjo petition placed before the Volksraad in 1936, which requested a conference to discuss the grant of autonomy to the Indies within ten years.[76] PAI branches in various centers organized public meetings in support of the petition, to which al-'Aṭṭās was a signatory.[77] For some Indonesians, this was already sufficient proof that the organization was genuine in its intentions.[78] As the PAI's political involvement increased, so too did its acceptability to Indonesian leaders. In 1939 the PAI expressed its full support for the actions of the Gaboengan Politik Indonesia (Indonesian Political Federation; GAPI), the newly-formed federation of nationalist parties which demanded the establishment of an Indonesian parliament.[79] By 1940 the organization had become part of the Indonesian political mainstream, its acceptance symbolized by its admission to GAPI in October of that year.[80]

In attaining membership in GAPI, the *muwallads* of the PAI achieved their aim of being accepted as Indonesians, at least in a political sense. Does this indicate that the boundaries of Indonesian-ness itself were changing? Was it a return to the earliest days of the Indonesian political movement, when Hadramis were accepted as equal members of Sarekat Islam? The answer to these questions is clearly no. The PAI leaders had self-consciously redefined themselves as Indonesians *and not Hadramis*. In myriad ways—from speaking Indonesian to condemning the flow of money from Indonesia to Hadramawt, from campaigning against Arab moneylenders to identifying with Indonesian nationalist aspirations—they sought to show that they had abandoned their Hadrami identity in order to take up an Indonesian one.[81] Thus their position was fundamentally different from that, say, of a Javanese who was accepted as Indonesian without having to deny his Javanese-ness. A Hadrami could not, by definition, be an Indonesian; Indonesian-ness was only possible for someone who ceased to identify as Hadrami.

OPPOSITION TO THE PAI

To gain acceptance by Indonesian nationalists, of course, was only half the battle. The greater challenge for the PAI was to convince the *muwallads* to view themselves as Indonesians. This struggle for the hearts and minds of the Indies-born Hadramis was joined by the PAI with great energy and enthusiasm. Baswedan was central to the campaign. He gave rousing speeches to public meetings across the length and breadth of Java, seeking to "awaken" the *muwallads* to the fact that

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[76] Susan Abeyasekere, "The Soetardjo Petition," *Indonesia* 15 (April 1973): 81-107.

[77] See, for example, *Pertja Selatan*, February 22, 24, and 26, 1938, as cited in *IPO* 10 (1938).

[78] *Tempo*, March 25, 1937, as cited in *IPO* 16 (1937).

[79] *Pemandangan*, October 2, 1939, as cited in *IPO* 40 (1939).

[80] Jan M. Pluvier, *Overzicht van de Ontwikkeling der Nationalistische Beweging in Indonesie in de Jaren 1930 tot 1942* (The Hague: N. V. Uitgeverij W. van Hoeve, 1953), p. 179. Of course, some residual anti-PAI feeling remained. In April 1941 a contributor to the newspaper *Tjaja Timoer* warned Indonesians not to be fooled by the rhetoric of the PAI, arguing that the organization had not yet proved its commitment to Indonesia as its homeland. *Tjaja Timoer*, April 29, 1941, as cited in *IPO* 19 (1941).

[81] "Politiek Program PAI," *Insaf*, April 1937, p. 60; "Membasmi Lintah Darat," *Insaf*, April 1937, p. 54.

their true homeland was Indonesia.[82] Baswedan was directly responsible for the establishment of many of the early branches of the PAI, although his success came at considerable personal cost, for the continuous travel placed great strain on his fragile health. Apart from holding public meetings, the PAI spread its ideals through several official and semi-official organs. The monthly periodicals *Insaf* (Awareness) and *Sadar* (Aware), both published in Batavia, and later the Surabaya-based monthly *Aliran Baroe* (New Current), all vigorously promoted the PAI and its vision of the *muwallads* as Indonesians.[83] Perhaps the best measure of their success was the spread of PAI branches which, as we have seen, was initially slow but increased rapidly from 1938.

The growth of the PAI was matched by a ground swell of opposition in the Hadrami community. Some criticism of the PAI appeared almost as soon as the organization was formed. Interestingly, the newspaper of the now-defunct IAV, *Al-Jaum*, was an early forum for critics who accused the PAI of throwing away their culture and creating a cleavage between the Hadramis.[84] But the most heated and persistent condemnation of the PAI came at the time when the organization achieved its greatest expansion, from 1938 to 1941. The rise in opposition at this time is reflected in a resolution passed at the PAI congress of 1938, which requested the executive to "pay attention to attacks in the newspapers."[85]

Its chief opponent was al-Irshad, whose major periodical, *Al-Murshid*, was filled with attacks on the PAI. There were several reasons why al-Irshad opposed the PAI so vehemently: some ideological and others more mundane. Many of the members of the PAI were graduates from al-Irshad schools. Baswedan himself had been active in al-Irshad as late as 1930, and other early PAI leaders had also been involved in the organization, including at least one former member of the al-Irshad central executive.[86] As Aḥmad Sūrkatī pointed out at al-Irshad's jubilee congress in 1939, the PAI could be regarded as a "fruit" of al-Irshad.[87] Less magnanimous Irshadis, however, considered that the formation of the PAI had split al-Irshad and drained away its energetic young supporters. Underlying the conflict between the two organizations, then, was a competition for membership: the PAI recruited its members from among those whom Irshadis regarded as their natural support base.[88]

In essence, two charges were laid against the PAI. The first, which by now has a familiar ring, was that the organization divided the Hadramis into two groups, *peranakan* and *totok*. It thereby created needless conflict between Hadramis who

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[82] *Matahari*, November 13, 1934, as cited in *IPO* 45 (1934); and Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan*, p. 67.

[83] Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, "The Arab Periodicals of the Netherlands East Indies, 1914-1942," *BKI* 152,2 (1996): 242-3.

[84] See, for example, the article quoted in *Adil* (no date provided), as cited in *IPO* 49 (1934); and *Al-Jaum*, September 7 and 14, 1935, as cited in *IPO* 41 (1935). In such articles we may also see an undercurrent of hostility towards those who had left the IAV to join PAI.

[85] "Congres Persatoean Arab Indonesia ke-3 di Semarang," *Insaf*, April 1938, p. 72.

[86] This was Ḥusayn al-Bakrī, formerly the second secretary of the executive of al-Irshad. "Soerat Terboeka! Boeat Pemoeka-Pemoeka Al-Irsjad Soerabaja plus Redactie Almoersjid," *Aliran Baroe*, March 1939, pp. 19-20.

[87] "Maḥḍar ijtimā ' yawm al-aḥd al-'umūmī," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 36.

[88] This point was made in interviews with Djadid Lahdji (Surabaya, January 24, 1994) and Hussein Badjerei (Jakarta, February 3, 1994).

had previously been united. In the words of one disaffected PAI member, "pure Arabs who aren't *peranakan* . . . are hated and opposed,"[89] and "the PAI has become the *bearer* of new disagreement and discord among the Arabs in Indonesia generally."[90] The second charge against the PAI was that, in recognizing Indonesia as their homeland, its leaders rejected their Arab identity and sought to assimilate with the Indonesians. The PAI's rejection not only of Hadrami-ness, but also of *'urūbah*, Arab-ness itself, was profoundly shocking to many Hadramis. According to G. F. Pijper, the Dutch Assistant Adviser for Native Affairs who was well-acquainted with the Hadrami community, even some members of PAI found it difficult to concur with the idea of abandoning the Arabian homeland, "giving up much of what previous generations have considered as the highest national heritage."[91] To non-members, the desire to turn one's back on Arab history and culture was simply inconceivable. The response of the editors of *Al-Murshid* was plain: "*Al-Murshid* will spare no effort in defending *'urūbah* against the rotten pens that seek to violate its honor."[92]

Opposition to the PAI was heightened by the aggression with which the organization promoted its ideas. Apart from meetings and periodicals, the PAI spread its message through the use of songs and theatrical performances. The organization's theme song, the *Mars PAI* (PAI March), called on the *peranakans* to unite in the PAI. Its rousing chorus may be translated as follows:

> Indonesia, symbol of my unity
> Indonesia, land where I was born
> The Indonesian Arab Union
> Shines brighter and brighter
> We remain loyal.[93]

In such songs we may perhaps find a counter to the pro-Hadrami songs taught in the Arab schools.

Even more controversial was the unprecedented step of promoting the organization through theatrical performances which were open to the entire Indies public. The first PAI play was entitled *Korban Adat* (A Victim of Tradition). Written by Hoesin Bafagieh, it was performed before a large audience at the second PAI congress in Surabaya on March 27, 1937.[94] Little is known of the story but, judging from later plays, it would have contained a thinly veiled didactic message about Indonesia as the *muwallad* homeland. Theatrical performances became a feature of PAI congresses between 1937 and 1941. Even Abdurrahman

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[89] "Sebab-sebab kita keloear dari PAI," *Al-Murshid*, February 15, 1939, p. 2 (Malay section). This was a reprint, in serial form, of a pamphlet by Mohammad Sahak, *Apa Pekerdjaan PAI?* (Mohammad Sahak, 1938).

[90] "Sebab-sebab kita keloear dari PAI," *Al-Murshid*, March 1, 1939, p. 2 (Malay section). Emphasis in original.

[91] *De Ontwikkeling van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlandsch-Indie*, ed. R. C. Kwantes (Groningen: H. D. Tjeenk Willink, 1975), vol. 4, p. 430.

[92] "Khaṭarāt Al-Murshid," *Al-Murshid*, January 10, 1939, p. 4.

[93] Suratmin, *Abdul Rahman Baswedan*, p. 69. Dutch translations of this and other PAI songs can be found in mr. 1115x/38, MK, ARA.

[94] "Verslag Congres PAI jang ke II," *Insaf*, April 1937, p. 56.

Baswedan found the time to pen two plays, *Mr. Faisal* and *Menoedjoe Masjarakat Baroe* (Towards a New Society).[95] By far the most controversial production, however, was *Fatimah*, a play written by Hoesin Bafagieh for the third PAI congress in Semarang, where it was performed on April 16, 1938.[96] Additional performances took place in Batavia, Solo, and Pekalongan.[97]

It is easy to see why *Fatimah* aroused heated opposition. The hero of the play is Moechtar, a young *muwallad* teacher at an Arabic school. At the beginning of the play a wedding is conducted between Moechtar and Fatimah, the young daughter of Nasir, a wealthy Hadrami merchant. The marriage is not consummated, however, because Fatimah is still a child. Soon after the marriage, Nasir dies. His fortune is divided three ways: one portion goes to Fatimah, one portion to Joesoef, her drunkard brother, and the remaining portion is held in trust for the long-lost son fathered by Nasir with an indigenous village woman. From here the plot descends into melodrama. In brief, Joesoef squanders his wealth on liquor and women, and then endeavors to break up his sister's marriage to Moechtar in order to lay his hands on her inheritance. Moechtar resigns from his teaching position and leaves town in order to avoid the family conflict, becoming an itinerant trader. While trading in the islands east of Java, he coincidentally meets the father of Nasir's indigenous wife (now deceased), who reveals that he, Moechtar, is actually the long-lost son of Nasir, his dead father-in-law. Moechtar returns to Java with this shocking news, only to discover that Joesoef has gone mad and Fatimah, his child-bride and sister, has passed away. "Lā illāha illāllāh" (there is no god but God), he cries out, contemplating his fate as the curtain falls.[98]

According to its promotional material, *Fatimah* contained "delicate and devastating SELF-CRITICISM for the Arab community in Indonesia. Which, at this time, has much that needs to be improved."[99] In fact, the criticism was more devastating than delicate. The play pulled no punches in its portrayal of Arab youths as drunks, Arab traders as heartless polygamists, and Arab money-lenders as religious hypocrites.[100] Bafagieh was also able to incorporate the central message of the PAI into the play. In a scene in the Arab school, Moechtar asks his students to sing the patriotic song, *Ḥaḍramawt Yā Bilādī* (Hadramawt O My Country). Afterwards he admits to a friend that the homeland of his *muwallad* students is not Hadramawt, but Indonesia. Nevertheless, "in order to get my mouthful of rice, I have to violate the truth with this sort of deception, which is

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[95] Haikal, "Indonesia-Arab," p. 436; and "Mr Faisal," *Aliran Baroe*, April 1940, p. 14.

[96] "Congres PAI ke-tiga," *Insaf*, April 1938, pp. 57-8.

[97] "Keterangan Officieel dari PAI," *Insaf*, August 1938, pp. 133-4; and "Sekeliling Tooneel Fatimah!," *Aliran Baroe*, October 1939, p. 1.

[98] H. Bafagih, *Tooneel Tjerita "Fatimah" dalam 8 Bedrijf* (Surabaya: n.p., 1938).

[99] Ibid., p. i. Capitals in the original.

[100] Important in this respect is the otherwise minor character, Ammi Oeboed. He is a private religious teacher who teaches his students to chant the *Qur'an* while, in the background, he conducts usurious business. When one student mispronounces the word *ribā* (usury) in the verse, "Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury," Ammi Oeboed angrily corrects his pronunciation, then returns to his money-lending transaction. Bafagih, *Tooneel Tjerita "Fatimah,"* pp. 40-42. The verse concerned is 2:275.

only intended to comfort the executive of the school and the parents of the students."[101]

Fatimah was accused of exposing the Hadramis to public derision. A contributor to *Al-Murshid* summed up the views of many when he described it as "a destructive story, which ridicules the beliefs and customs of the [Arab] people."[102] Indeed, it is striking that Bafagieh did not challenge the Indonesian stereotype of the Hadramis; rather, he paraded stereotypical Hadramis for the whole community to see. The controversy aroused by the play was most heated in Surabaya, Bafagieh's home town, where a deputation from al-Irshad and al-Rābiṭah succeeded in persuading local authorities not to allow an advertised performance to proceed.[103]

This last point brings us to one of the unexpected achievements of the PAI, which was to bring about an effective "cease-fire" between al-Irshad and al-Rābiṭah. The British Consul-General in Batavia, Fitzmaurice, observed in 1938 that a mutual opposition to the PAI "has tended to draw Seyyids and Irshadis together and to soften the long-standing ill-feeling between them."[104] As we have seen, both organizations were committed to the notion of Hadrami *waṭanīyyah*, and were therefore shocked by the PAI's attempt to sever the link between the *muwallads* and their "beloved homeland," Hadramawt. Like al-Irshad, although perhaps to a lesser extent, al-Rābiṭah also suffered from a loss of cadre to the PAI, the most prominent example being Bafagieh himself, who was the former secretary of its Surabaya branch. The two organizations were thus forced together by the greater threat posed by the PAI. An article in the Irshadi periodical *Al-Murshid* proclaimed in November 1938 that "the Irshadis and the supporters of al-Rābiṭah will stand before them [the PAI] as a united bloc and will, by the power of God, support one another and stay united so long as the heavens and the earth remain."[105] The contrast with the situation only seven years before, at the height of the *sayyid* title conflict, need hardly be stated. Cooperation between the two groups took various forms, including sending the joint deputation to Surabaya officials to halt the performance of *Fatimah*.

PALESTINE, ARAB-NESS, AND INDONESIAN-NESS

Conflict between the PAI and al-Irshad came to a head over the question of Palestine. At first glance it may seem surprising that the battle between Jews and Palestinians should have become central to what was, after all, an internal conflict between Hadramis in the Indies. The reason lies in the fact that, by the 1930s, Palestine had become a international issue where both Arab and Islamic pride were at stake.[106] Writers in the international Arabic press called upon the world's

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[101] Ibid., p. 30.

[102] "Ḥawl riwāyah Fāṭimah," *Al-Murshid*, September 1938, p. 14.

[103] "Keterangan Officieel dari PAI," p. 133.

[104] Fitzmaurice to FO, Memorandum on the political situation in the Netherlands East Indies in 1938, December 23, 1938, CO 273/652, PRO.

[105] "'Alā hāmish al-ḥayāh al-ijtimā'īyyah," *Al-Murshid*, November 24, 1938, p. 9.

[106] On the internationalization of the Palestine question, see William L. Cleveland, *Islam Against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (London: Al Saqi Books, 1985), pp. 78-81.

Muslims in general, and Arabs in particular, to rally to the defense of their brothers in Palestine against the imperialist Jews and British.[107] For the Hadramis in the Indies, support for Palestine became a kind of litmus test, a convenient measure of commitment to one's Arab identity. Members of al-Irshad actively supported Palestine on the grounds of *'urūbah*, the Arab identity which Hadramis shared with their Palestinian brothers. The PAI, on the other hand, took the opposite stance in order to show that its members placed Indonesia first.

The Palestine question first aroused the interest of some Irshadis in 1929. In August of that year, disturbances broke out across Palestine over the question of rights of access and worship in the Wailing Wall-Dome of the Rock area, a section of Jerusalem of great significance for Muslims as well as Jews. In response to the Wailing Wall disturbances, a committee was formed in Surabaya under al-Irshad auspices in September 1929. The committee aimed to collect money to assist Palestinian victims of the riots.[108] Among its achievements were the raising of funds, convening of public meetings, and the dispatch of protest telegrams to the League of Nations and the British government.[109]

The Palestine committee appears to have fallen into inactivity until 1936. In that year attempts were made to revive it following the outbreak of the Arab Revolt, an armed uprising by Palestinians against the Jewish National Home which continued until 1939. A meeting held in the al-Irshad clubhouse in Surabaya in July 1936 to re-establish the committee attracted the attention of the local Dutch authorities, who requested a halt to such activities.[110] More successful, however, was a meeting held in Batavia late in 1937, which formed the "Arab Committee to Support the Victims of Palestine." This committee aimed to raise funds to support women and children who lost relatives in the revolt in Palestine. It consisted mainly but not exclusively of Irshadis. Among them were several current or former members of the al-Irshad central executive including 'Abdullāh bin Muḥammad Bāḥashwān, 'Abdullāh Bājurāi, Sa'īd bin Sālim Mash'abī, and Ḥasan bin Sāliḥ 'Arqubī, the nephew of 'Umar Manqūsh, who had replaced his uncle as Arab *kapitein* in Batavia.[111] The committee made rapid progress. By November 1938, only a year after its establishment, it had sent 1,400 Egyptian pounds, in excess of twelve thousand guilders, for distribution in Palestine. These funds were raised almost entirely within the Hadrami community, through such activities as

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[107] James Jankowski, "Egyptian Responses to the Palestine Problem in the Interwar Period," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980): 1-38.

[108] Clipping from *Soerabajasch Handelsblad*, October 21, 1929, mr. 1045x/29, MK, ARA; and enclosure in Crosby to FO, December 18, 1929 (notes on the political situation in the Netherlands East Indies), L/P&S/10/1307, IOL. It was the same incident which made Palestine, for the first time, a major issue in the press in Egypt. Jankowski, "Egyptian Responses," pp. 4-9.

[109] Al-Irsjad Soerabaja, *Al Irsjad Soerabaia: Verslag Tahoenan 1935-1936* (Surabaya: n.p., 1936), p. 3.

[110] Ibid.

[111] "Lajnah i'ānah mankūbī Filasṭīn al-'Arabīyyah," *Al-Murshid*, December 4, 1937, p. 19. Both Bāḥashwān and 'Arqubī were members of the central executive in 1927, Mash'abī was al-Irshad's first treasurer and later chairman, and Bājurāi its long-serving secretary.

the screening of an Arab film in various cities around Java and selling postcards with views of Palestine.[112]

The reasons behind al-Irshad's support for the Palestinians are complex. On the one hand, al-Irshad leaders frequently paid lip service to the notion that all Muslims, regardless of race, should unite in defense of Palestine. At the same time, however, it is clear that they regarded Palestine as an issue of particular concern to Arabs. The assumption that the Hadramis should lead the Palestine movement in the Indies, on the grounds that they were the Arab brothers of the Palestinians, was never far below the surface. This attitude was typified by 'Umar Hubayṣ. Speaking at a mass meeting of Muslims held at the al-Irshad club in Surabaya in September 1938, Hubayṣ acknowledged the importance of Islamic brotherhood, but went on to make a special plea to the Arabs. They were obliged to "advance by the length of an arm if the others advance by the span of a hand" in the cause of Palestine.[113] Like Hubayṣ, contributors to the Irshadi periodical *Al-Murshid* returned repeatedly to the theme of *'urūbah*, Arab-ness, in calling on the Hadramis to support Palestine. The Palestinians were described as the defenders of the fortress of Arab-ness,[114] the pride of the brow of Arab-ness,[115] and those who honored the face of Arab-ness by their actions.[116] One contributor regarded the small contribution of Hadramis in Surabaya to the Palestine fund as "a disgrace to the honor of Arab-ness and the Arab spirit."[117] Another was more optimistic: to him, the Arab spirit had been awakened and it would not sleep again.[118]

The PAI was conspicuously absent from these activities in support of the Palestinians and the attendant glorification of Arab-ness. The organization's stance on Palestine was defended by its leader, Abdurrahman Baswedan. He argued that, while his organization had no objection to supporting the Palestinians on an Islamic basis, the first priority of the *muwallads* should be to work for the benefit of their own homeland and society. "One should bear in mind primarily the situation around him, ie. the bad lot of his own people, which is right before his eyes."[119] According to Baswedan, many Hadramis, including those who were involved with the Palestine committee, focused their attention on the outside world at the expense of their homeland, Indonesia. The PAI sought to restore the balance by reminding them of their obligations at home.[120] In any case, he added,

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[112] Pijper to Governor-General, November 19, 1938, mr. 1117x/38, and Pijper to Governor-General, January 20, 1939, mr. 107x/39, both located in vb. October 26, 1939, no. 17, MK, ARA.

[113] "Filasṭīn," *Al-Murshid*, October 1, 1938, p. 7. Indeed the Hadramis fulfilled this plea, for they embarked on more organized action for Palestine than any Indonesian Islamic organization. This fact was tacitly acknowledged by the 1938 congress held by MIAI, the Indonesian Supreme Islamic Council, which requested Indonesian Muslims to send donations for Palestine via the Hadrami committee in Batavia. Secretariaat MIAI, *Boekoe Peringatan MIAI 1937-1941* (n.p.: 1941), p. 8.

[114] "Allāhumma fa'shhad," *Al-Murshid*, December 4, 1937, p. 17.

[115] "Khaṭarāt Ramaḍān," *Al-Murshid*, November 8, 1938, p. 4.

[116] "Filasṭīn al-'Arabīyyah bayn al-ḥadīd wa'l-nār," *Al-Murshid*, July 1938, p. 5.

[117] "Mawqifunā al-mukhjil izā'a Filasṭīn," *Al-Murshid*, March 1938, p. 20.

[118] "Alā fal-yashhad al-'ālam," *Al-Murshid*, January 1938, p. 13.

[119] "PAI dan Soal Palestina," *Insaf*, November 1937, p. 171.

[120] Ibid., p. 172.

the PAI represented a relatively poor section of the Hadrami community, and could contribute little to the cause of Palestine anyway.

Baswedan regarded *Al-Murshid*'s glorification of the Arab spirit as a conscious ploy to win back supporters of the PAI by inflaming their sense of Arab identity.[121] This assessment ignores the level of genuine outrage over Palestine which inspired so many Irshadis. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that al-Irshad would have leaped to the defense of *'urūbah* with such vigor had it not perceived that Arab-ness itself was under attack in the Indies. Palestine thus became a convenient symbol of the PAI's denial of its Arab heritage, and a useful stick with which to beat the organization. From late 1938, contributors to *Al-Murshid* launched repeated attacks on the PAI on the grounds that the organization's stance on Palestine was a betrayal of its Arab origins. One writer considered Baswedan's comments on Palestine to have "blackened the face of Arab-ness":

> If you had said it as an individual . . . we would not have condescended to reply to you. It is the greatest insolence that you bear the name "Indonesian Arab Union" when you have proven to the public that you are the furthest of God's creatures from Arab-ness.[122]

Another writer lamented, again in reference to the PAI's stance on Palestine:

> Arab-ness does not have a strong influence on the souls of its sons [in the Indies], nor does Arabic have a high position among its owners. How could I say otherwise, when this movement which calls for the abandonment of Arab-ness and forsaking Arabic has met with acceptance from those with feeble souls, and support from those with a small intellect.[123]

Such articles, which appealed to the Arab sentiment of members of the PAI, appear to have had some success in winning back supporters from the PAI. Muhammad Sahak, a PAI member who left the organization along with at least sixteen others in 1937, cited the PAI's stance on Palestine as one of the reasons for his disillusionment with the PAI leadership.[124]

The strength which "Arab" feeling had attained was revealed in February 1939 with the formation in Surabaya of the Indo-Arabische Beweging (Indo-Arab Movement; IAB) under the leadership of Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-'Amūdī, the former leader of the IAV. A mirror image of the PAI—which it was clearly formed to combat—the IAB included among its aims the strengthening of racial feeling, promotion of the idea that Arabs should remain Arabs, maintenance of the bond

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[121] He quoted a proclamation of the committee which was clearly directed against the PAI: "they [the Palestinian Arabs] will be pleased that in Indonesia they still have brothers who, up until now, have not denied their nationality and culture." "PAI dan Soal Palestina," p. 172.

[122] "'Alā hāmish al-ḥayāh al-ijtimā'īyyah," p. 9.

[123] "Khaṭarāt Ramaḍān," *Al-Murshid*, November 8, 1938, p. 6. Although the PAI's first communiqué had declared that Arabic should be "emphasised like the Indonesian language," in fact the organization used Indonesian in all of its communications and promoted Indonesian-language education.

[124] Sahak, *Apa Pekerdjaan PAI?*, p. 6.

with the homeland, and promotion of Arab culture.[125] At a public meeting held later in February, al-'Amūdī reiterated the organization's goals of remaining Arab, deepening Arab national feeling, and promoting Arab culture.[126] He went on to discuss the contemporary situation of the Jews in Europe, observing that despite the fact that they considered Germany their homeland, German Jews were expelled from the country with the rise of nationalism. This was a revealing comment which suggested that, at least for al-'Amūdī, maintaining links with the *waṭan* was a useful "insurance policy" in case the situation of the Hadramis in the Indies became untenable.[127] The IAB, which was condemned by the PAI and Indonesian nationalists alike,[128] appears to have had a small support base (a situation which was not helped by al-'Amūdī's residual unpopularity among the Hadramis).[129] Nevertheless, the organization had grown sufficiently to be able to hold its first conference in June 1941.[130]

It is difficult to assess whether the pro- or anti-PAI forces commanded greater support among Hadramis in the Indies on the eve of the second world war. Judging by the spread of its branches, the PAI had gained broad support. But there were formidable forces arrayed against it: not only the IAB, which was a small organization, but also the larger and older al-Irshad, al-Rābiṭah al-'Alawīyyah, and other Hadramawt-oriented parties. No membership figures are available, and even if they were, all parties claimed that they represented a "silent majority" and that their support in the community far exceeded the number of enrolled members. It is clear, however, that the community was deeply divided between those who identified firmly as Indonesian and those who continued to consider themselves Hadrami "above all else."

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125 *Pemandangan*, February 14, 1939, as cited in *IPO* 7 (1939). On the IAB see also Pluvier, *Overzicht van de Ontwikkeling der Nationalistische Beweging*, p. 91; and de Vries to Governor-General, February 17, 1939, mr. 233x/39, MK, ARA.

126 *Soeara Oemoem*, February 27, 1939, as cited in *IPO* 9 (1939).

127 The same reasoning may perhaps have influenced the decisions of reformers to become more closely involved in their homeland, which were discussed in the previous chapter.

128 "Manifest Mesoem dari I.A.B.," *Aliran Baroe*, October 1939, p. 16.

129 De Vries to Governor-General, February 17, 1939, mr. 233x/39, MK, ARA.

130 *Keng Po*, June 13, 1941, as cited in *IPO* 25 (1941).

CONCLUSION

In the four decades after the founding of Jam'īyyah Khayr, the Hadramis in the Indies underwent a revolution in their thinking about religion, education, and society which may aptly be termed a Hadrami *nahḍah* or "awakening." Acutely aware of the rapid developments which were occurring within the Chinese and indigenous communities, the men of the *nahḍah* dedicated themselves to establishing voluntary associations, modern schools, and newspapers in a determined bid to bring "progress" to the Hadramis. The *nahḍah* raised questions about community leadership, about education, about the reform of Islam, and about the structure of Hadrami society—questions which were to be keenly debated for the remainder of the colonial period.

Underpinning this intellectual ferment were continuous attempts to define and re-define who the Hadramis were. In response to the changing world around them, the men of the *nahḍah* gradually abandoned their fundamentally religious sense of identity in favor of a modern-style Hadrami patriotism. Through a close reading of a range of sources published by the Hadramis, it has been possible to trace the emergence of the notion of Hadrami-ness and the competition between old and new elites to give it meaning. The concept first arose among Hadramis who had contact with prominent Chinese and indigenous Indonesians, particularly those who were involved in early Islamic organizations such as Sarekat Islam. It was a response both to the growing exclusivity which characterized the rise of Chinese and Indonesian nationalisms, and to the physical segregation forced upon the Hadramis by the Dutch colonial government. From this relatively small group the notion of Hadrami-ness spread rapidly by means of Arabic newspapers, voluntary Hadrami social organizations, and, most importantly, Arabic-language schools.

Most Hadramis came to agree with the anonymous writer who stated in 1915 that they were "Hadramis above all else."[1] But conflict continued over what it meant to be Hadrami, as different elites competed to control the definition of Hadrami-ness. The traditional elite, the *sayyids* or descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad, sought to impose their vision of Hadrami-ness as the maintenance of Hadrami tradition and, in particular, the upholding of the traditional pattern of social stratification. In this way they hoped to preserve their privileged position in the Hadrami community as it entered the modern world. Against this view, the men in the organization al-Irshad put forward their own vision of an egalitarian Hadrami society which had existed before the arrival of the *sayyids*. Their view that Hadrami-ness required a return to this pristine age of egalitarianism

[1] "Naḥnu Ḥaḍramiyūn qabla kulli shay'," *Al-Bashīr*, April 15, 1915, p. 1.

coincided with their own interests as a *parvenu* elite of wealthy traders and property-owners with low status in the traditional stratification system.

The ultimate battleground in this contest to control the definition of Hadrami-ness was Hadramawt itself. The *nahḍah* was taken back to the homeland in the 1930s by *sayyids* and Irshadis who competed to introduce modern technology and ideas, including their concepts of Hadrami identity. In the short term the *sayyids*, who still enjoyed a position of social and political strength in Hadramawt, were able to contain the Irshadi challenge. In the longer term, however, they would have to come to terms with the notion of equality inherent in the proposition that the Hadramis were all members of a modern nation.

The struggle to define modern Hadrami identity was characterized by conflict and discontinuity, a fact which was illustrated yet again in 1934 with the formation of the Persatoean Arab Indonesia. Conscious of the hostility of Indonesian nationalists towards the Hadramis—a hostility which they attributed to the community's preoccupation with its Hadrami-ness—and aware of the example of some *peranakan* Chinese who had proclaimed their Indonesian identity, the founders of the PAI explicitly rejected Hadrami-ness in favor of being Indonesian. But the differences among the Hadramis should not distract us from recognizing a certain underlying unity. Analyzing the language with which Irshadis, *sayyids*, and PAI members spoke about their identity reveals that there was fundamental agreement on one point: that identity was centered on homeland.

Hadrami writers in Arabic and Malay routinely expressed their identity in terms of place, as belonging to *waṭan Ḥaḍramawt* or *tanah air Indonesia*. In contrast, expression of identity in terms of race or nation, such as "the Hadrami people" or "the Indonesian people," was less common. The centrality of "homeland" is captured in the expression *waṭanīyyah*, which has been translated here as patriotism, but more literally means "being oriented to the homeland," or perhaps "homeland-mindedness." Hadrami writers agreed that the homeland was the source of their identity. This explains why Aḥmad Sūrkatī, the al-Irshad teacher, was denounced by *sayyids* as "the enemy of the homeland" when he challenged Hadrami customs;[2] it is also the reason why Abdurrahman Baswedan, founder of the PAI, devoted all his energy to promoting the proposition that Indonesia was the homeland of the *muwallads*. Once this truth was accepted, he felt, Indonesian-ness would follow naturally, just as Hadrami identity was derived from acknowledgment of Hadramawt as the homeland.

What can the Hadrami *nahḍah* reveal about the broader processes of social and ideological change occurring throughout Southeast Asia? As we saw in the Introduction, the early decades of the twentieth century were a time of change in the way people across the region, and indeed throughout the colonized world, understood themselves. Faced with the dual challenge of colonial rule and modernity, Southeast Asians questioned whether traditional concepts of leadership, religion, community, and identity could adequately equip them for the modern world. This questioning gave rise to a wide range of responses. The construction of "national" communities, which scholars once took almost for granted, was in fact a complex process; as Anthony Milner has shown in his study of

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[2] Schrieke, "De Strijd onder de Arabieren in Pers en Literatuur," *Overdruk uit de Notulen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* 58 (1920): 199.

Malay identity, it involved contest between competing views of how the community should be defined.[3]

The Hadrami case offers an acute example of the importance which was attached to this process, and the degree of conflict it could entail. The highly contested nature of the struggle to define the identity of the Hadramis was linked to their position as a diaspora community "on the border" of several societies. This position increased the range of influences on the Hadramis, because they had access to the Middle Eastern Arabic press as well as the local press. It also broadened the range of possible identities—Muslim, Arab, Hadrami, Indonesian. But, at the same time, their position "on the border" rendered the Hadramis peculiarly vulnerable if they made what proved to be the wrong choices. Since the options were so varied and the stakes so high, it is perhaps not surprising that their search for identity seemed even further from resolution in 1942 than it had in 1920.

The one point on which the Hadramis agreed—that identity was centered on homeland—also distinguishes their case from other Southeast Asian communities. Studies of Vietnamese, Burmese, and Malay attempts to redefine their identity during this period have shown that "race" or "people" became the most important basis for articulating the boundaries of the community.[4] A similar process took place among indigenous Indonesians; as we have seen, between 1912 and 1919 Hadramis were forced out of the Indonesian mass movement Sarekat Islam on the grounds that they belonged to *bangsa asing*, a "foreign race," instead of *bangsa Indonesia*.[5] The subtle contrast between identity based on "people" and the Hadrami conception of identity based on place is captured in language. The dominant theme in Malay ideology, for example, was to serve the *bangsa*,[6] while the Hadramis were urged time and again to serve their *waṭan*.

The Hadrami emphasis on "homeland" may have resulted, once again, from the position of the Hadramis as a diaspora community. The very fact of exile, it could be argued, heightened their awareness of the homeland. But it should also be noted that the mutability of the concept of homeland made it particularly useful for the Hadramis. As Baswedan and his fellow PAI members demonstrated, it is possible to shift loyalty from one homeland to another. Homeland can be a matter of will, whereas race is often perceived as unchanging. A conception of identity based around homeland, then, allows one to cross over the border from one identity to another: a useful skill for a small migrant community. This is not to suggest that identity was conceived in a cynical way, with an eye to the advantages it might offer. It is merely to observe that ideological change involves the adoption of concepts which make sense of the situation in which a community finds itself.

This study concludes in 1942, a year which marks a decisive turning point in Indonesian history. The Second World War and its aftermath changed the environment in which Hadramis in the Indies thought about their identity. The wartime occupation of the colony by the Japanese temporarily severed the link

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[3] Anthony Milner, *The Invention of Politics in Colonial Malaya: Contesting Nationalism and the Expansion of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[4] See the Introduction for discussion of this point.

[5] See discussion in chapter two.

[6] Tan Liok Ee, *The Rhetoric of Bangsa and Minzu: Community and Nation in Tension, The Malay Peninsula, 1900-1955* (Clayton: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 7 and 16.

between Hadramawt and the Indies. A bitterly fought war between the Republic of Indonesia and the returning Dutch colonizers ended in 1949 with Dutch recognition of Indonesian independence. The triumph of the Indonesian nationalists effectively narrowed the range of options for the Hadramis. If they wished to remain in Indonesia (as most of the community did),[7] then the Indonesian homeland became the only politically acceptable focus of their loyalty. Accordingly, it appears that virtually no Hadrami rejected the Indonesian citizenship they received, as it were by default, under the so-called "passive" citizenship system.[8] Allegiance to *waṭan Ḥaḍramawt*, the Hadrami homeland, was quietly placed in mothballs, an embarrassing relic of a bygone age.

The link between Indonesia and Hadramawt was not entirely broken. Some Hadramis returned from Indonesia to Hadramawt in the 1950s to participate in the independence struggle, to which, according to Joseph Kostiner, they brought the version of Third World communism which they had imbibed from the Indonesian Communist Party.[9] Others remained sufficiently interested in the affairs of their erstwhile homeland to form a Committee for the Liberation of Occupied South Arabia in the 1950s.[10] Yet others maintained contacts with family in Arabia. Even the Prime Minister of the Republic of Yemen in the early 1990s, Haider Abubakar Al-Attas, had a brother living in Jakarta: they shared the same father, but Haider's mother was Yemeni while his brother's mother was Indonesian.[11] Nevertheless, the number of Indonesian Hadramis who retain a connection with Hadramawt is extremely small. A telling indication of majority feeling is the fact that al-Irshad, the largest of the pre-war organizations which continued to exist, was hesitant to offer public support for the independence movement in South Arabia, fearful of being accused of "defending the fatherland."[12]

On the whole, the Hadrami community of the postwar era recognized that it was now "Indonesian" with remarkable rapidity. This swift adjustment to the new circumstances can be seen in the career of 'Umar Hubayṣ, the head teacher of the al-Irshad school in Surabaya. Before the war Hubayṣ had been one of the most outspoken opponents of the PAI and its promotion of Indonesian identity. It was Hubayṣ who announced in 1939 that "our reform, and the ordering of our affairs in

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[7] Immigration statistics show that more Arabs left Indonesia than entered the country in the early 1950s, but the absolute figures moving in either direction were small. Between 1950 and 1955, 3049 Arabs left Indonesia and 1185 entered. C. H. Schaap, "De Buitenlanders in Indonesie," *Indonesie* 10 (1957): 170.

[8] Hamid Algadri, *Politik Belanda terhadap Islam dan Keturunan Arab di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Haji Masagung, 1988), pp. 133-4; and Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Indonesian Arabs," *Civilisations* 5,1 (1955): 19. According to the "passive" system all Hadramis (and all indigenous Indonesians) were considered citizens of the new Indonesian state unless they refused citizenship.

[9] Joseph Kostiner, "Arab Radical Politics: Al-Qawmiyyun al-Arab and the Marxists in the Turmoil of South Yemen, 1963-1967," *Middle Eastern Studies* 17,4 (October 1981): 466.

[10] 'Umar Sulaymān Nājī, *Tārīkh Thawrah Al-Iṣlāḥ wa'l-Irshād bi-Indonesia* (ms.), p. 126.

[11] Hamid Algadri, *Dutch Policy against Islam and Indonesians of Arab Descent in Indonesia* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1994), p. viii (preface by Haider Abubakar Al-Attas).

[12] Hussein Badjerei, personal correspondence, October 6, 1994. The al-Irshad youth wing took a more active stand on the independence of South Arabia, but insisted that it had no special links with the region and was opposed to colonialism everywhere.

this region, will not be complete before the reform of our country Hadramawt."[13] But in 1947 Hubayṣ became a member of the Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat (Central Indonesian National Committee), the appointed body which functioned as a parliament during the Indonesian revolution. By 1956 he was a member of the Constituent Assembly and the Indonesian Parliament, representing the Islamic party Masjumi.[14] Thus in the decade since the revolution he had reinvented himself as an "Indonesian" leader at the national level.[15] The example of Hubayṣ was repeated by al-Irshad as a whole. The first book-length study of the organization, which appeared in Indonesian in 1996, is subtitled *Filling in the History of the People*.[16] The "people" intended is clearly the Indonesian people, and the author makes plain his view that there is no doubt al-Irshad belongs to the history of Indonesia, not Hadramawt.

Compared to the experience in other parts of the Hadrami diaspora, the Hadramis in Indonesia did not suffer greatly from the victory of indigenous nationalism. Contrary to the fear of at least one pre-war Hadrami leader, they were not put "on the next boat" after the Dutch left. Indeed they have been accepted as Indonesian more readily, for example, than Hadramis in East Africa have been accepted as African.[17] There has been no expulsion of Hadramis such as occurred in Hyderabad in 1948,[18] and more violently in Zanzibar in 1964.[19] In the 1990s, as de Jonge points out, several Indonesians of Hadrami descent have become cabinet ministers.[20] The most prominent among them, the long-serving Minister for Foreign Affairs Ali Alatas, is the son of the former PAI leader and Soetardjo petition signatory, 'Abdullāh bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās. This family connection is no coincidence, for the PAI played an important part in rendering the Hadramis acceptable as "Indonesians" by demonstrating that they were loyal to Indonesia long before it became politically imperative to do so.

Some writers, such as Hamid Algadri, have argued that the incorporation of the Hadramis into the modern Indonesian nation is merely the continuation of a centuries-long process of assimilation, which was briefly interrupted by the imposition of Dutch colonial rule and the operation of policies like the *passenstelsel* and *wijkenstelsel*.[21] This position greatly underestimates the extent

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[13] "Maḥḍar ijtimā' yawm al-aḥd al-'umūmī," *Al-Murshid*, August 1, 1939, p. 33.

[14] Ahmad Mahfudz, "Al-Ustadz Umar Hubeis: Ulama dan Pejuang Islam Indonesia," *Khazanah* 1 (May/July 1990): 31.

[15] When I interviewed Ali Algadri, a former PAI leader, in 1994, he still resented Hubayṣ's postwar transformation into an Indonesian nationalist. In his view only the PAI members were true Indonesian nationalists. Interview with Ali Algadri, Surabaya, January 24, 1994.

[16] Hussein Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad: Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Presto Prima Utama, 1996).

[17] A preliminary discussion on the situation of Hadramis in East Africa can be found in Abdalla Bujra, "The Hadhramis in East Africa: Identity, Integration and Relations with Hadhramaut" (paper presented to the International Workshop on Hadramawt and the Hadrami Diaspora, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1995), pp. 31-2.

[18] Omar Khalidi, "The Arabs of Hadramawt, South Yemen in Hyderabad," *Islam and the Modern Age* 18,4 (November 1987): 218.

[19] John Okello, *Revolution in Zanzibar* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967).

[20] Huub de Jonge, "Discord and Solidarity among the Arabs in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942," *Indonesia* 55 (April 1993): 73.

[21] Algadri, *Politik Belanda*, pp. 140-1.

and complexity of the social and ideological changes which have occurred among indigenous Indonesians since the beginning of the twentieth century. The changing attitudes towards the Hadramis which have been traced here allow some tentative observations to be made about the shifting meanings of Indonesian-ness during this period. The concept of Indonesian identity which arose in the second decade of the century, for example, excluded the Hadramis on what appear to have been racial grounds. The fact that the PAI achieved acceptance as an "Indonesian" organization in the late 1930s, on the other hand, suggests that the borders of Indonesian-ness had become less rigid, and that Indonesian identity was something which could be earned through involvement in the nationalist movement. It seems to have been this more flexible meaning of Indonesian-ness which enabled the Hadramis to be accepted in independent Indonesia. Of course, the shifting meanings of Indonesian identity is a vast subject which awaits further research.

What are we to make of the Hadrami awakening in the light of these post-independence changes? Was it an isolated phase, all traces of which were swept away by the tide of Indonesian nationalism? Insofar as the *nahḍah* was characterized by the promulgation of Hadrami *waṭanīyyah* in the Indies, the Second World War indeed sounded its death knell. But if the *nahḍah* is to be understood as something larger, as an endeavor to make sense of the Hadramis' place in the modern world, then our conclusion must be otherwise. The men of the awakening laid the groundwork for the post-war "Indonesian-ization" of the Hadramis. Their willingness to change in response to changing circumstances, their ability to experiment with a range of answers to fundamental questions about who they were and where they belonged, and their sensitivity towards ideological shifts in the communities on whose "borders" they found themselves, are features of a lively and flexible intellectual tradition which has been inherited and continued by the Indonesian Hadramis of the post-independence generation.

ABBREVIATIONS

ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague
BKI	*Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*
INIS	Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies
IOL	India Office Library, London
IPO	*Overzicht van de Inlandsche en Maleisch-Chineesche Pers*
JMBRAS	*Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSBRAS	*Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSEAS	*Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*
KITLV	Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden
MBZ	Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken
MK	Ministerie van Kolonien
mr.	mailrapport
ms.	manuscript
PN	Perpustakaan Nasional, Jakarta
PRO	Public Records Office, London
vb.	verbaal

SELECT GLOSSARY

Glossary items are Arabic unless otherwise indicated

ahlu'l-bayt	literally people of the house; family of the Prophet Muḥammad
'Alawi	collective family name of the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad living in Hadramawt
'ālim/'ulamā'	scholar/s
aqḥāḥ	pure; born in Hadramawt (plural form of *quḥḥ*, see below)
bangsa (Mal.)	race; people
dākhil/dukhalā'	intruder/s; foreigner/s
fatwā	legal opinion
ḥadīth	reported statement of the Prophet Muḥammad
ḥaḍramīyyah	Hadrami-ness; Hadrami identity
inlander (D.)	native
irshād	guidance
Irshadi	member or supporter of al-Irshad, the Arab Association for Reform and Guidance
iṣlāḥ	reform
jam'īyyah	association; organization
kafā'ah	equality; equivalence
madhhab	path; school of Islamic law
musāwah	equality
muwallad	born in the Indies
nahḍah	awakening; resurgence
passenstelsel (D.)	pass system; regulation requiring individuals to obtain a travel pass to leave their city of residence
peranakan (Mal.)	half-blood; born in the Indies
quḥḥ	pure; born in Hadramawt
sayyid/sādah	lord/s; traditional title for descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad
sharī'ah	the canonical law of Islam
sunnah	the words and actions of the Prophet Muḥammad
tanah air (Mal.)	literally land and water; homeland
totok (Mal.)	full-blooded
'urūbah	Arab-ness; the Arab character
vreemde oosterlingen (D.)	foreign orientals; legal category for non-indigenous Asians living in the Indies

waṭan	homeland
waṭanīyyah	patriotism
wijkenstelsel (D.)	quarter system; regulation requiring ethnic groups to reside in specified quarters in a city

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CO273	Original Correspondence, Straits Settlements
CO537	Colonies General Supplementary Original Correspondence
CO725	Aden Correspondence
FO371	General Political Correspondence 1906-1941
FO882	Arab Bureau Papers 1911-1920

2. India Office Library, London (IOL):

L/P&S	India Office Records, Political and Secret Department
L/P&S/10	Departmental Papers: Political and Secret Separate (or Subject) Files 1902-1931
R/20/A-G	Records from Aden
R/20/A	Settlement of Aden 1839-1937 and Protectorate Affairs 1878-1928
R/20/C	Aden Protectorate 1928-1962

3. Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague (ARA):

(a) Ministerie van Kolonien (Ministry of Colonies):
The main series utilized were the ordinary and secret *mailrapporten* (mr.) and *verbalen* (vb.) between 1900 and 1942.

(b) Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (Ministry of Foreign Affairs):
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4. Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden (KITLV):
G. A. J. Hazeu collection.
R. A. Kern collection.

5. Rijksuniversiteit Leiden:
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6. Private collection of Hussein Abdullah Badjerei, Jakarta:
Minutes of the Central Executive of al-Irshad 1915-1920 (Arabic manuscript)

- **Interviews**

A. Hamid Attamimi, Jakarta, January 4, 1994. Al-Irshad school student in the 1930s.
Hamid Algadri, Jakarta, January 7 and 17, 1994. PAI leader and activist.
Abdullah Al-Ansary, Jakarta, January 16, 1994. Al-Irshad school student and teacher in the 1920s and 1930s.
Hussein Badjerei, Jakarta, January 18 and 31, 1994 and February 3, 1994. Son of 'Abdullah Badjerei; al-Irshad school student; Secretary-General of al-Irshad from 1966 to 1985.
Djadid Lahdji, Surabaya, January 24, 26, 27, and 28, 1994. Chairman of al-Irshad division for East Java in 1994.
Ali Algadri, Surabaya, January 24, 1994. PAI activist.
Ahmad Attamimi, Surabaya, January 25, 1994. Chairman of al-Irshad Surabaya branch in 1994.
Abdullah Hubeis, Surabaya, January 26, 1994. Son of 'Umar Hubeis. Al-Irshad school student in the 1930s.

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Al-Salām (Surabaya 1920)
Al-Irshād (Surabaya 1920-1921)
Al-Shifā' (Pekalongan 1922)
Al-Qisṭās (Surabaya 1923)
Al-Dhakhīrah Al-Islāmīyyah (Batavia 1923-1924)
Būrūbūdūr (Batavia 1924-1925)
Al-Wivac (Buitenzorg 1925-1926)
Pandji Poestaka (Weltevreden 1926)
Al-Ma'ārif (Batavia 1927-1928)
Al-Dahnā' (Surabaya 1928-1929)
Al-Mahdjar (Surabaya 1928-1929)
Lembaga Baroe (Surabaya 1928-1929)
Al-Miṣbāḥ (Surabaya 1929)
Barhūt (Batavia 1929)
Ḥaḍramawt (Surabaya 1929-1933)
Al-Iṣlāḥ (Batavia 1930-1931)
Al-Rābiṭah (Batavia 1930-1931)
Al-Mishkāh (Surabaya 1931)
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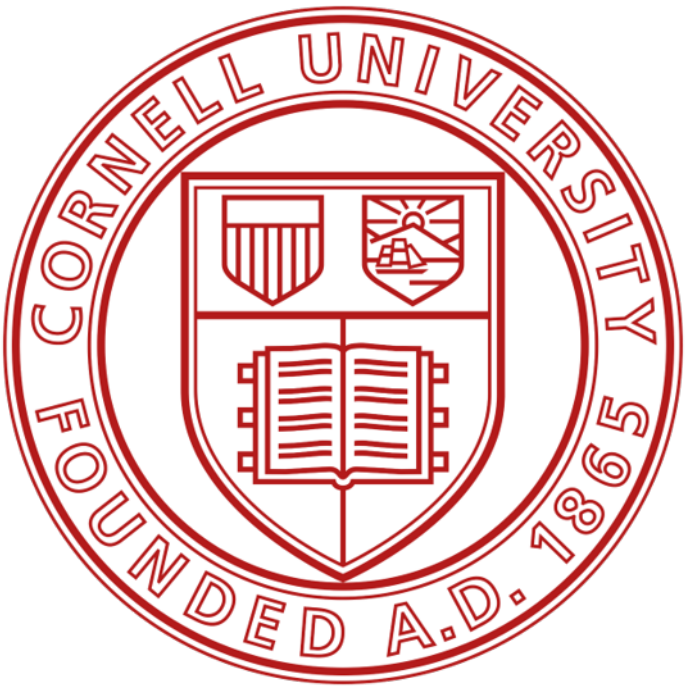

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